ALA American Library Association

Booklist Reader

Booklist
Leading book discovery
June 2025

Book and audiobook recommendations for all ages

To Beach Their Own

New and Stellar LGBTQ Reads

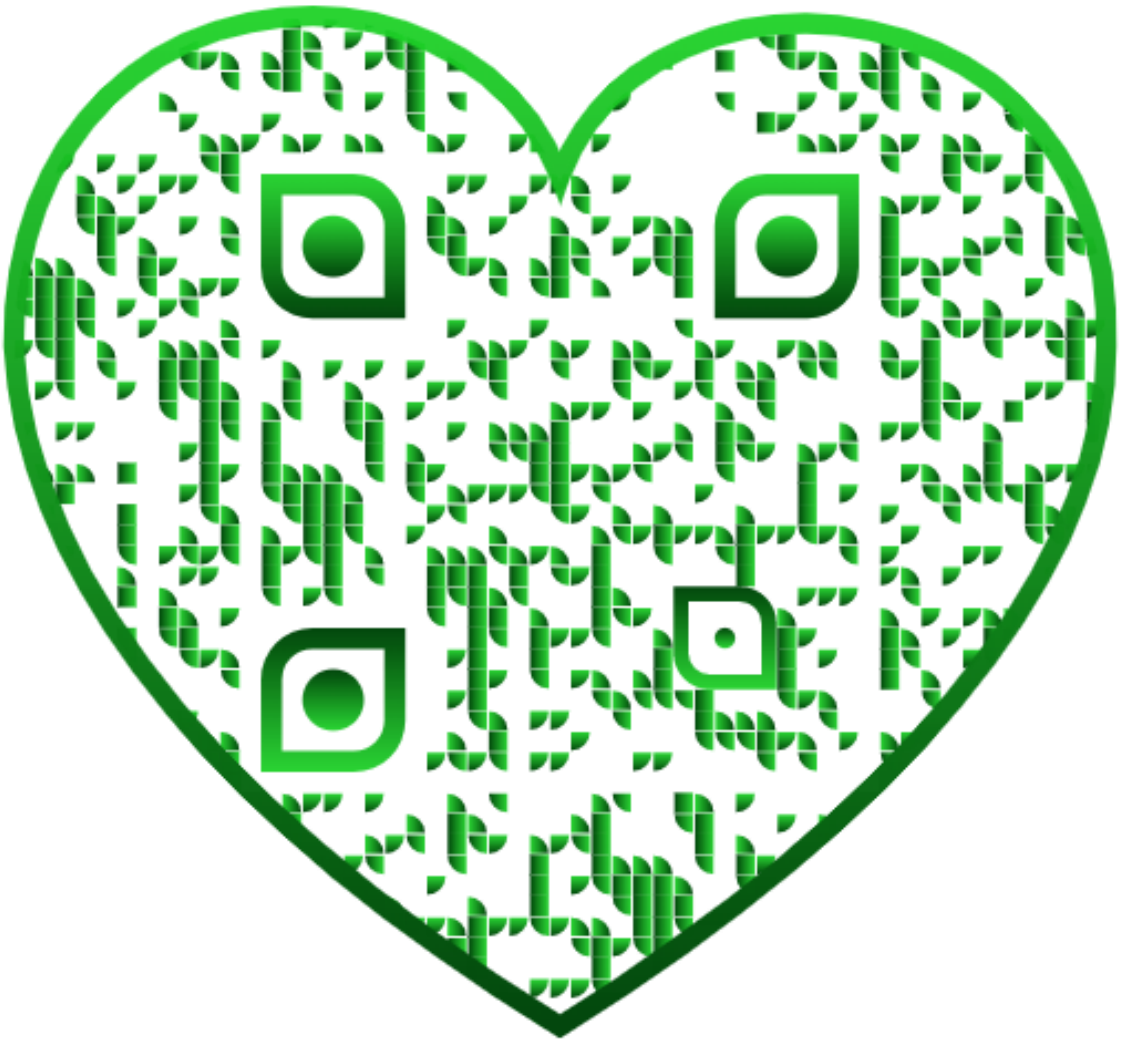
Summer Audio Bingo

Graphic Adaptations of Classroom Reads

Art by Cátia Chien, from *Fireworks*, by Matthew Burgess

PBS BOOKS

LIBRARY READS



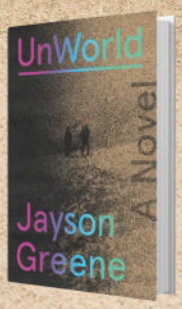
Get Swept Away WITH THESE Summer Reads

FOR FANS OF *THE PERFECT COUPLE*, *THIS IS WHERE I LEAVE YOU*, AND TELEVISION SHOWS LIKE *SUCCESSION*

Sarah MacLean
THESE SUMMER STORMS:
A NOVEL

From *New York Times* bestselling author Sarah MacLean, a razor-sharp, wildly sexy novel about a wealthy New England family's long-overdue reckoning . . . and the one week that threatens to tear them apart.

Ballantine Books | Available in Hardcover, eBook, Audio, and Large Print Editions



FOR READERS OF JENNIFER EGAN, KAZUO ISHIGURO, AND JESSAMINE CHAN

Jayson Greene
UNWORLD:
A NOVEL

From the author of *Once More We Saw Stars* comes a gripping novel about four intertwined lives that collide in the wake of a mysterious tragedy. Set in a near-future world where the boundaries between human and AI blur, the story challenges our understanding of consciousness and humanity.

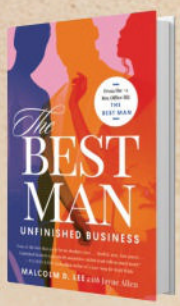
Knopf | Available in Hardcover, eBook, Audio, and Large Print Editions

FOR FANS OF JASMINE GUILLORY, CHRISTINA LAUREN, AND OLIVIA DADE

Mia Sosa
WHEN JAVI DUMPED MARI

The *USA Today* bestselling author of *The Worst Best Man* is back with a fun and flirty rom-com about a pact between friends that goes awry when one of them suddenly decides to get married.

Putnam | Available in Trade Paperback, eBook, and Audio Editions

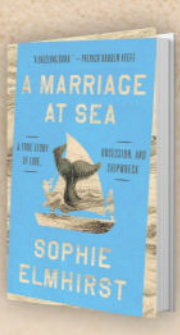


FOR FANS OF KENNEDY RYAN, TIA WILLIAMS, JASMINE GUILLORY, AND TERRY McMILLAN

Malcolm D. Lee; with Jayne Allen
THE BEST MAN:
UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The beloved characters from *The Best Man* movies and hit television series reunite for a sexy and soulful, heartbreaking and hilarious reckoning of love.

Storehouse Voices | Available in Trade Paperback, eBook, and Audio Editions

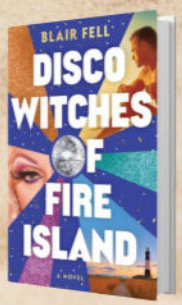


FOR READERS OF *THE ART THIEF*, *THE LOST CITY OF Z*, AND *THE BOYS IN THE BOAT*

Sophie Elmhirst
A MARRIAGE AT SEA:
A TRUE STORY OF LOVE, OBSESSION, AND SHIPWRECK

The electrifying true story of a young couple shipwrecked at sea: a mind-blowing tale of obsession, survival, and partnership stretched to its limits.

Riverhead | Available in Hardcover, eBook, and Audio Editions



FOR FANS OF CASEY McQUISTON, BREANNE RANDALL, AND TJ KLUNE

Blair Fell
DISCO WITCHES OF FIRE ISLAND:
A NOVEL

Hit the dance floor with a coven of queer witches on 1980s Fire Island in this gay fantasy romance about finding magic, love, and family in the face of tragedy.

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Booklist Reader

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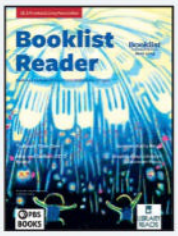

On the Cover

From *Fireworks*, by Matthew Burgess, illustrated by Cátia Chien, and published by Clarion, an imprint of HarperCollins. *Fireworks* appears in this issue's Summertime Picture Books feature. Illustration © 2025 by Cátia Chien. Used by permission of the publisher.

From the Publisher

Summer fun, beach fun, and . . . conference fun? Yes, that's right, I'll be joining *Booklist* editors and other ALA staff at the ALA Annual Conference & Exhibition in Philadelphia at the end of June. It's a wonderful time to gather with library workers, publishers, authors, avid readers, and like-minded individuals to discuss the world of books and libraries. While there, I hope to meet and interact with many library workers from all across the country (and world). If you are attending the conference, please visit booth 1720, the *Booklist* booth, and meet us, spin our reading wheel, grab complimentary issues and buttons, and let us know what you're reading. It's the perfect time to say hello, because this year is *Booklist*'s 120th anniversary and we have exciting new merch to commemorate the occasion. Find more information here: https://alagraphics-gift-shop.myspreadshop.com/booklist (*Booklist* brag: I've got mine and I'll be wearing it at the conference!). Happy reading!

—George Kendall
gkendall@ala.org

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George Kendall

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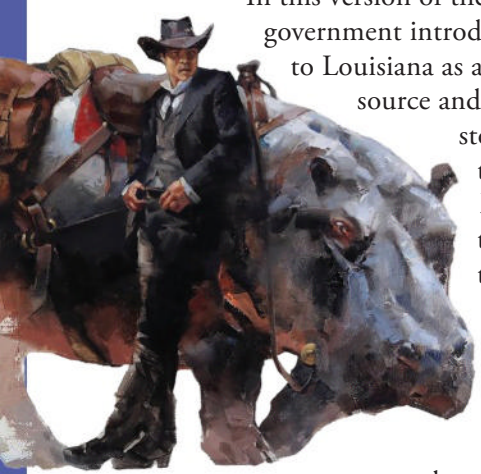
Stories of Kinship and Hope

by Fin Leary

Trans resistance is a powerful antidote to rising anti-trans legislation and book bans targeting trans stories. One effective method of resistance is storytelling: sharing tales that hold a mirror up to trans readers' lives, offering kinship and comfort. For all readers, these stories offer a humanizing window into a dangerously marginalized group. The books detailed below all center trans characters and will ignite a spark of hope, which is a powerful component of dissent.

American Hippo. By Sarah Gailey. 2018. Tor.com.



In this version of the United States, the government introduced hippos en masse to Louisiana as an alternative meat source and Winslow Houndstooth, along with his talented crew, are hired to take back the waterways from the feral beasts. This work of alternative historical fiction is a phenomenal romp through the bayou in the 1890s with queer and trans cowboys, outlaws, con artists, and assassins.

Dead Collections. By Isaac Fellman. 2022. Penguin.

Eccentric archivist Sol and widow Elsie are kept apart by Sol's secret—his vampirism keeps him locked in his basement office, hidden from the sun. This gorgeous queer fantasy novel dives into themes of finding a sense of place in your own body, grief, archivist work, trans identity, the queer/trans body as a horror figure, and chronic illness.

The Death of Vivek Oji. By Akwaeke Emezi. 2020. Riverhead.

This literary novel is an evocative mosaic of love and searing friendship. By giving away its ending from the beginning—embedded in the title—the story takes readers on the radiant journey of protagonist Vivek's life as a nonbinary and gender-nonconforming Nigerian.

Art from *American Hippo* and *Dead Collections*.

Fierce Femmes and Notorious Liars. By Kai Cheng Thom. 2016. Metonymy.

In this semi-autobiographical coming-of-age story, a young Asian trans girl called Dearly escapes her abusive home and creates a new, chosen family among other trans femmes. Dearly, a deeply unreliable narrator, feels larger-than-life, as does her foray into vigilante justice against the backdrop of the Street of Miracles, the pleasure district she now calls home.

The In-Between Bookstore. By Edward Underhill. 2025. Avon.

Underhill's adult debut employs the time-travel trope in a unique way: Darby, the trans main character, is able to connect with his teenage self, but only when he goes inside the small-town local indie bookstore where he worked at that time. The novel plays with time and memory and leaves readers sitting with the uncertainty of continual self-discovery in your thirties.

More Than Organs. By Kay Ulanday Barrett. 2020. Sibling Rivalry.

With a focus on brown, queer, and trans futures, this expansive and moving book of poetry questions the concept of wholeness. These poems will shift the reader's consciousness in a profoundly loving way, and quell the hunger that can leave so many marginalized people feeling hollow and less than whole.

An Unkindness of Ghosts. By Rivers Solomon. 2017. Akashic.

Nonbinary protagonist Aster lives on the spaceship *USS Matilda* in this sf novel that analogizes the U.S. Antebellum South, touching on class, racism and slavery, generational trauma, and gender identity. Aster is a fiery main character who will exert a vice grip on readers' hearts throughout this dramatic tale.

Your Body Is Not Your Body. Edited by Alex Woodroe and Matt Blairstone. 2022. Tenebrous.

With centaur alien bodily modification clubs, medieval monks and demonic pregnancies, brain worms bent on destroying less desirable gender expressions, and more, this delightfully horrifying anthology of short body-horror stories written by trans authors is best read while gripping a comforting blanket.

Adobe Stock / kite_rin

To Beach Their Own

by Annie Bostrom, Susan Maguire, and Donna Seaman

What do you need to capture that summer feeling in a book? What kinds of stories help you relax? We know it's different for every reader—some like thrills, some like to chill; some like a dishy tale, some like hard facts; some yearn for a love story, some prefer their narratives heartbreaking. No matter your preference, we've got you covered. These beach-read suggestions are laid out by category, and within each category is a mélange of suggestions to help all kinds of readers find the perfect beach read, no matter what that means.

Beyond WWII

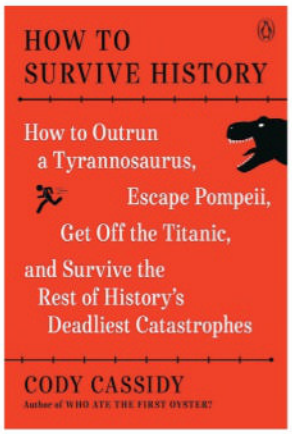
WWII tales continue to dominate the historical-fiction market, but these novels reach beyond that popular period, featuring a circle of American women in 1960s Saigon, a family enduring the Tulsa Race Massacre, the building of the Panama Canal, a trip across Depression-era America, and a century in South America as seen through the life of an indomitable woman.

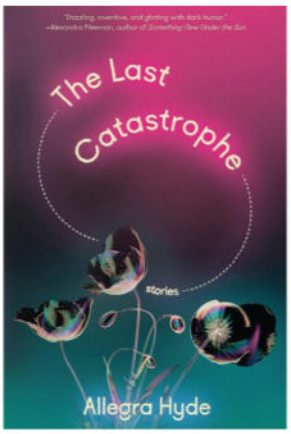
- **Absolution.** By Alice McDermott. 2023. Farrar.
- **The Filling Station.** By Vanessa Miller. 2025. Thomas Nelson.
- **The Great Divide.** By Cristina Henríquez. 2024. Ecco.
- **The Trackers.** By Charles Frazier. 2023. Ecco.
- **Violeta.** By Isabel Allende. 2022. Ballantine.

How to Survive an Apocalypse

These fiction and nonfiction books offer advice and clues on how to survive impending disaster, featuring a "prisoner scientist" surviving a Siberian labor camp; a guide that combines history, humor, and popular science; a story collection that explores how humans will combat climate change and capitalism; essays about the vibrant act of writing; and an informed compendium of interviews about how to mitigate climate catastrophe.

- **The Half Life of Valery K.** By Natasha Pulley. 2022. Bloomsbury.
- **How to Survive History:** How to Outrun a Tyrannosaurus, Escape Pompeii, Get off the Titanic, and Survive the Rest of History's Deadliest Catastrophes. By Cody Cassidy. 2023. Penguin.
- **The Last Catastrophe.** By Allegra Hyde. 2023. Vintage.
- **Never Say You Can't Survive:** How to Get through Hard Times by Making Up Stories. By Charlie Jane Anders. 2021. Tor.com.
- **What If We Get It Right?** Visions of Climate Futures. By Ayana Elizabeth Johnson. 2024. Random.

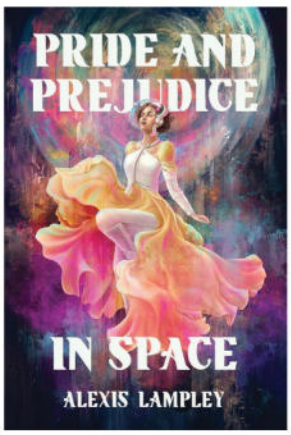

HOW TO SURVIVE HISTORY
How to Outrun a Tyrannosaurus,
Escape Pompeii,
Get Off the Titanic,
and Survive the Rest of History's Deadliest Catastrophes
CODY CASSIDY

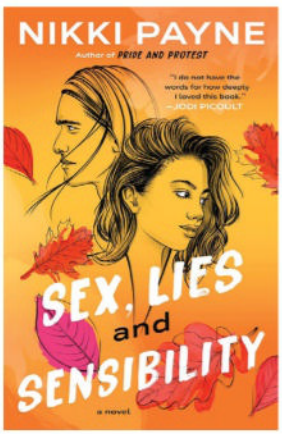


Jane Austen in the Modern Era

Continuing our Year of Jane in honor of Austen's 250th birthday, here are some modern adaptations of the beloved classic novels, from an Austen scholar tutoring in St. Tropez to a second-chance romance that addresses tough issues to droids serving tea in space (yes, space) to the buoyant tale of a down-on-their luck family of women to a story about sisters trying to run a successful inn.

- **All That Life Can Afford.** By Emily Everett. 2025. Putnam.
- **Incense and Sensibility.** By Sonali Dev. 2021. Morrow.
- **Pride and Prejudice in Space.** By Alexis Lampley. 2024. Union Square.
- **Relative Strangers.** By A. H. Kim. 2024. Graydon.
- **Sex, Lies and Sensibility.** By Nikki Payne. 2024. Berkley.

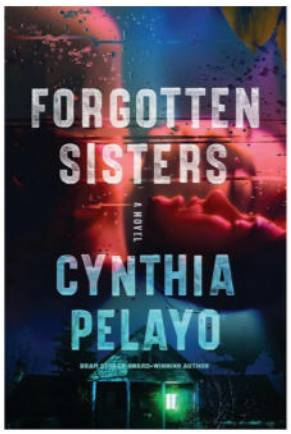


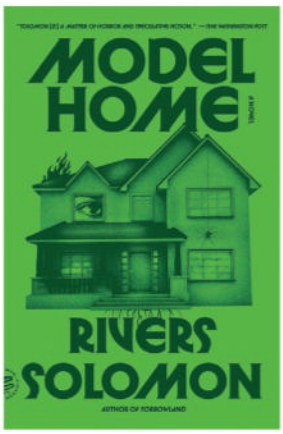


New Gothics

Gothic novels are deliciously creepy stories that leave the reader feeling chilled to the bone. These new gothics feature a pair of sisters on the Chicago riverfront, a far-from-idyllic home renovation, a mold-infested manor in 1950s Mexico, a gated community in suburban Dallas, and a fever-dream of a governess tale.

- **Forgotten Sisters.** By Cynthia Pelayo. 2024. Amazon/Thomas & Mercer.
- **Gothictown.** By Emily Carpenter. 2025. Kensington.
- **Mexican Gothic.** By Silvia Moreno-Garcia. 2020. Del Rey.
- **Model Home.** By Rivers Solomon. 2024. MCD.
- **Victorian Psycho.** By Virginia Feito. 2025. Norton/Liveright.





Library Love

Readers who love libraries love reading about libraries. These books center libraries, library workers, and the healing power of books and community spaces, from an action-packed fantasy to a sweet tale of found family to the kaleidoscopic account of a library fire to a vital reminder of the library's value to the gentle story of five Tokyo residents finding connection.

- **The Great Library of Tomorrow.** By Rosalia Aguilar Solace. 2024. Blackstone.
- **The Last Chance Library.** By Freya Sampson. 2021. Berkley.
- **The Library Book.** By Susan Orlean. 2018. Simon & Schuster.
- **Meet Me at the Library:** A Place to Foster Social Connection and Promote Democracy. By Shamichael Hallman. 2024. Island.
- **What You Are Looking for Is in the Library.** By Michiko Aoyama. 2023. Hanover Square.

In the *James* Mode

Percival Everett's *James* made huge literary waves last year, and you might still be waiting for your library copy. These novels resonate in similar ways, from a brilliant and hilarious tale featuring Mark Twain and his literary peers to imaginative takes on those resisting enslavement: an impetuous and romantic maid, a freed Black man who comes to have his own slaves, a smart and resilient woman who flees her Georgia plantation, and an enslaved man who discovers he has an intriguing power.

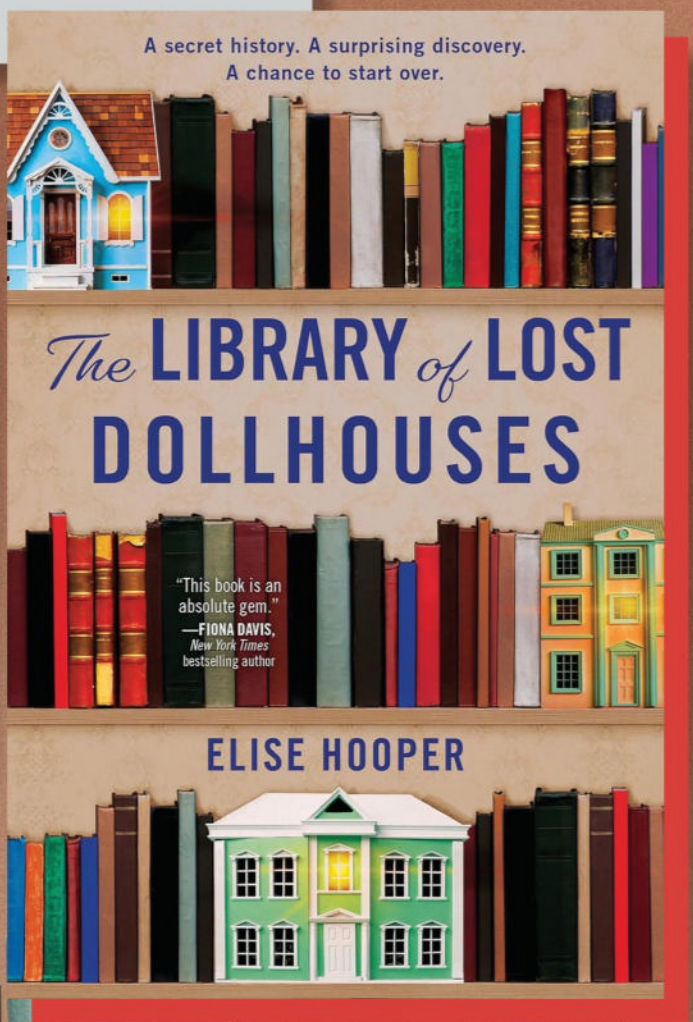
- **The Auburn Conference.** By Tom Piazza. 2023. Univ. of Iowa.
- **Junie.** By Erin Crosby Eckstine. 2025. Ballantine.
- **The Known World.** By Edward P. Jones. 2003. HarperCollins/Amistad.
- **The Underground Railroad.** By Colson Whitehead. 2016. Doubleday.
- **The Water Dancer.** By Ta-Nehisi Coates. 2019. Ballantine/One World.

10 Questions

Elise Hooper

by John Charles

A native New Englander, Elise Hooper spent several years writing for television and online news outlets before getting a MA and teaching high-school literature and history. Her debut novel *The Other Alcott* was a nominee for the 2017 Washington Book Award. Three more novels—*Learning to See, Fast Girls,* and *Angels of the Pacific*—followed, all centered on the lives of extraordinary but overlooked historical women. Elise lives in Seattle with her husband and two daughters.



1. Who is Elise Hooper when she is at home?
You can find me listening to an audiobook and making something in my art area with my sewing machines, laser cutter, and miniature-making tools. I will not be cooking.

2. What can you tell us about **The Library of Lost Dollhouses***?*
It's a dual-time line historical novel about a mysterious collection of dollhouses that reveal the secrets of their former owners. This book takes readers on a whirlwind adventure ranging from San Francisco to Belle Époque Paris to a rural English estate to Walt Disney's bustling 1950s Burbank studio.

3. What five words best describe* The Library of Lost Dollhouses*?
"Every woman needs a dollhouse."

4. Is the Belva Curtis LeFarge library you write about in* The Library of Lost Dollhouses *inspired by any real-life settings?
Isabella Stewart Gardner and her museum in Boston served as my inspiration, but I expanded the vision beyond an art collection and imagined a library filled with books, paintings, sculptures, maps, books, artifacts, and more.

5. You have written that dollhouses provided "your first foray into storytelling." What does this mean?
When I was seven, I received a dollhouse for Christmas. It had been built in the late 1800s for my great grandmother and passed down to my grandmother, then my mother, then me. As a girl, I played with that dollhouse for hours and made up countless stories about the different creatures and characters I imagined lived inside it.

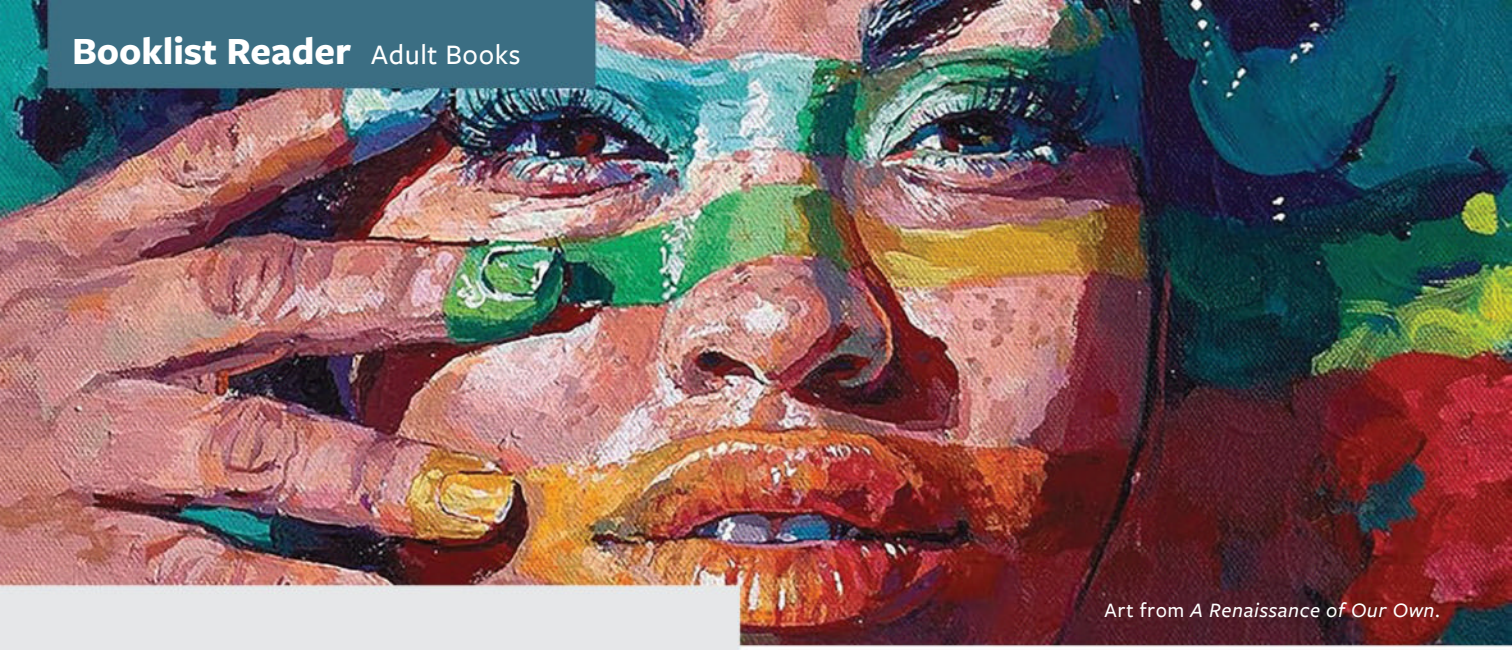
6. What is the book that made you fall in love with reading?
I remember crying inconsolably when I finished the Anne of Green Gables series. I felt such a deep connection to Anne Shirley. If I'm honest, I still do. In *The Library of Lost Dollhouses,* I give a nod to this beloved series by making one of my main characters a redheaded orphan.

7. What role have libraries played in your life?
A huge role! As a kid, I completed the summer reading challenge list every year. I've leaned on libraries for help at so many points in my life—as a high-school teacher, as a mom, and as an author. I'm a frequent visitor to my local Seattle Public Library branch (shout-out West Seattle!).

8. What is the best piece of life advice you have been given?
No one's thinking about you as much as you are. What a liberating concept!

9. What is next for you as an author?
Another book! This is the first time I've set a book where I live in Seattle, and it's been fun to learn local history.

10. How can readers learn more about you and your books?
Follow me on Instagram (@elisehooper) for reading recommendations and dollhouse projects. My website (www.elisehooper.com) also has the latest news about my books and events.



Art from *A Renaissance of Our Own*.

New & Stellar LGBTQ Reads

by Annie Bostrom

We're lucky to be living in a rich time for propulsive fiction featuring real-feeling queer characters and for enthralling memoirs and histories on significant, timely LGBTQ topics. Celebrate Pride Month with one or all of the reads below. It was hard to choose, but what can we say? We're *Booklist*. Book lists are our love language.

Fiction

The Ballad of Jacquotte Delahaye. By Briony Cameron. 2024. Atria.

This novel begins in 1665 with infamous pirate captain Jacquotte Delahaye in prison, then goes back to tell her story as a poor, young shipwright who dreamed of leaving her stifling life in Yáquimo, Santo Domingo. An absolute treasure for fans of LGBTQ+ historical fiction and tales of notorious figures from the past.

Experienced. By Kate Young. 2024. Penguin.

Bette is blissed out in bed when her girlfriend, Mei, drops the bomb. She wants them to take a three-month break so Bette can see other women. Delightful through and through, *Experienced* brings together a winning cast and a series of romcom-worthy setups for a love story as heartfelt as it is fun.

Hammajang Luck. By Makana Yamamoto. 2025. Harper Voyager.

Newly out of prison, Edie has to decide if they'll do one last job that should get them more money than they'll know what to do with. *Hammajang Luck* features all the best sf has to offer, from sick body modifications to a dystopian magnification of wealth inequality.

Murder in the Dressing Room. By Holly Stars. 2025. Berkley.

After drag queen Misty Divine discovers the body of her drag mother, rumors abound that she's the prime suspect. The first book by drag performer Stars combines fabulous details and a puzzling mystery, a thrill for fans of the emerging genre of queer cozies.

The Night of Baba Yaga. By Akira Otani. Translated by Sam Bett. 2024. Soho.

Shindo lives an anonymous existence in Tokyo, indulging her violent compulsions with street brawls, until she's hired to guard a Yakuza boss' daughter, or else. Evoking the Grimm's Brothers' warning tales, this literary genre-bender will appeal to readers who favor fairy-tale adaptations and vigilante-justice thrillers.

Notes from a Regicide. By Isaac Fellman. 2025. Tor.com.

Upon their deaths, Griffon learns he did not know much about the lives of his adoptive, trans parents. He uncovers the story of two young artists, individuals beaten by their government who loved each other and the family they created. Set in a distant (but eerily recognizable) future, this is a triumphant and blistering chronicle of love and resistance.

Some Strange Music Draws Me In. By Griffin Hansbury. 2024. Norton.

In a dual narrative, alternating between 2019 and 1984, a trans man on probation from his teaching job clears out his family home and looks back on the summer when he began to discover himself. This is a touchstone LGBTQIA+ coming-of-age novel that constantly seeks to complicate simplistic narratives around gender, sexuality, and class.

Nonfiction

Glitter and Concrete: A Cultural History of Drag in New York City. By Elyssa Maxx Goodman. 2023. Hanover Square.

Goodman parlays her ardor for drag into a uniquely comprehensive, vibrant, and eye-opening history of the art form in New York City, beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. As Goodman charts the ways drag became more mainstream, including the launching of drag story hours, she sets the current anti-drag and anti-LGBTQ+ backlash within a historical context.

He/She/They: How We Talk about Gender and Why It Matters. By Schuyler Bailar. 2023. Hachette Go.

The first openly trans NCAA Division 1 swimmer, Bailar helps readers understand why antitrans rhetoric and violence have reached disturbingly high levels. A wonderful resource for readers who want to know more on these topics but aren't sure where to start and for trans folks looking how to navigate coming out, dating, mental health, and more.

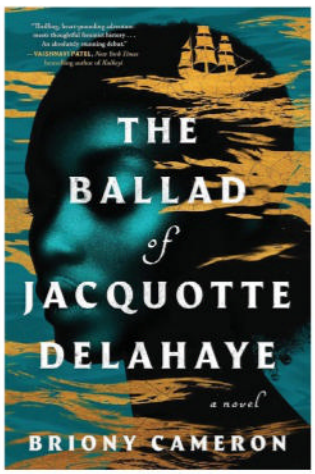
A Renaissance of Our Own: A Memoir, Manifesto, and Reimagining. By Rachel E. Cargle. 2023. Ballantine.

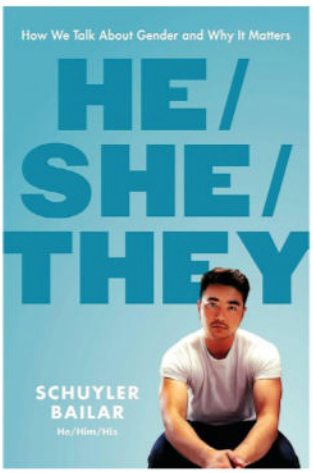
Cargle shares how she transformed her life through reimagining. Once a small-town Christian wife, Cargle is now an activist and innovator in the feminist and queer movements. She shares her manifesto, a blueprint that readers can utilize to map out their own dreams, as well as her knowledge, empathy, and action (KEA) framework for forming allyships.

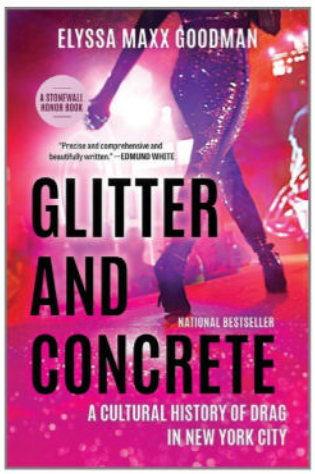
The Secret Public: How Music Moved Queer Culture from the Margins to the Mainstream. By Jon Savage. 2025. Norton/Liveright.

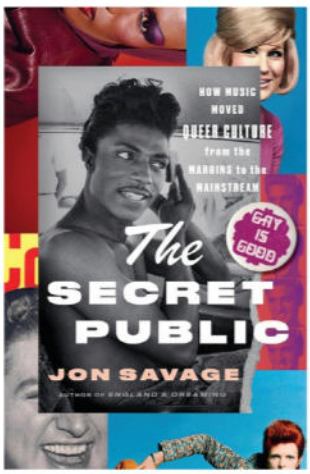
In Savage's masterful exploration of the LGBTQ+ cultural world, he discusses gay liberation, glam, camp, and disco, Brian Epstein and Lou Reed, the New York Dolls, Harvey Milk, the Village People, and more, all within the framework of how a minority subculture went mainstream.

Art from *Murder in the Dressing Room.*






ELYSSA MAXX GOODMAN
A STONEWALL HONOR BOOK
"Precise and comprehensive and beautifully written." —EDMUND WHITE
GLITTER AND CONCRETE
NATIONAL BESTSELLER
A CULTURAL HISTORY OF DRAG IN NEW YORK CITY



Art from *Undiscovered*.

Women Writers from Latin America

by Sara Martínez

Excellent works by Latin American women writers have been surreptitiously finding their way onto library shelves. With intriguing titles and curious covers that mask the profundity inside, these books will thrill intrepid readers who welcome discomfort, messiness, and having their tapetes movidos (their cores shaken) by challenging literature that ventures outside the zone of tidy endings. Born of trauma, feminicide, and marginalization, they bravely push the boundaries of narrative discourse to lay bare dark emotions and situations rife with monsters and ghosts ethereal and corporeal.

Clean. By Alia Trabucco Zerán. Tr. by Sophie Hughes. 2024. Riverhead.

An uncomfortable, fascinating, lovely, and affecting novel narrated by the maid of a well-to-do family in Santiago, Chile, who recounts the circumstances leading up to the death of the couple's daughter, their only child, in a tale that resonates broadly with the alienation and superficiality of late-stage capitalism.

Hurricane Season. By Fernanda Melchor. Tr. by Sophie Hughes. 2020. New Directions.

Melchor's bravura work blends truth with horror and myth in recounting the violent death of The Witch in a small Mexican village where poverty, exploitation, and violence abound. While the writing is magical, it is the realism that punctures the heart. The virtuosic display of hyper-literary prose is a whirlwind of curses, dark humor, mythology, profanity, and folk wisdom that gathers speed in an unrelenting barrage of brilliance, leaving the reader breathless. This is a work "of terrible beauty."

Liliana's Invincible Summer: A Sister's Search for Justice. By Cristina Rivera Garza. 2023. Bloomsbury.

In the only nonfiction book on the list and a Pulitzer Prize–winner, Garza seeks to defy a pattern of increasingly normalized, gendered violence, and understand her 20-year-old sister's lost life after she was murdered by a former boyfriend in Mexico City. Mixing memoir, feminist investigative journalism, and poetic biography, Garza evokes her sister's voice across time, and, like that of so many disappeared and outraged women, she demands justice.

Pink Slime. By Fernanda Trías. Tr. by Heather Cleary. 2024. Scribner.

Uruguayan writer Trías presents a bleak dystopian novel set on the coast of an unnamed South American city. Despair, arbitrariness, and resignation shape this unnerving tale about facing environmental destruction when a mysterious algae takes over the oceans, killing the fish and producing red-tinged, noxious fumes.

Seven Empty Houses. By Samanta Schweblin. Tr. by Megan McDowell. 2022. Riverhead.

With an aura of potential danger, these seven strange stories are about seven physically, emotionally, and literally empty houses. Unsettling elements threaten to upend such commonplace locales as family homes, suburban neighborhoods, and the local shopping mall featured in these ominous but addictive stories.

The Simple Art of Killing a Woman. By Patricia Melo. Tr. by Sophie Lewis. 2023. Restless.

Thoughtful first-person narration and starkly powerful

verse are interwoven with reports of murdered women, fluidly bearing the weight of Melo's gripping crime novel rich in fearless social commentary in which an unnamed São Paulo attorney heads to far-flung Acre in western Brazil to document the region's femicides.

Still Born. By Guadalupe Nettel. Tr. by Rosalind Harvey. 2023. Bloomsbury.

While gestating her thesis, Laura, who has decided not to have children, weaves together the stories of women who do want or have children, mostly in Mexico City: her good friend Alina, who decides, along with her husband, to have a child; Doris, who has a disturbed and disturbing son; and her neighbor, a domestic-violence survivor. A family of pigeons nesting on Laura's patio complete Nettel's sneakily profound novel.

A Sunny Place for Shady People. By Mariana Enriquez. Tr. by Megan McDowell. 2024. Hogarth.

A darkly humorous worldview shapes these weird and riveting stories mostly set in Buenos Aires (although the title tale is set in a very eerie Los Angeles). While exerting the morbid fascination of a train wreck, they also have a political charge that delivers traumatic depth and texture.

The Twilight Zone. By Nona Fernández. Tr. by Natasha Wimmer. 2021. Graywolf Press.

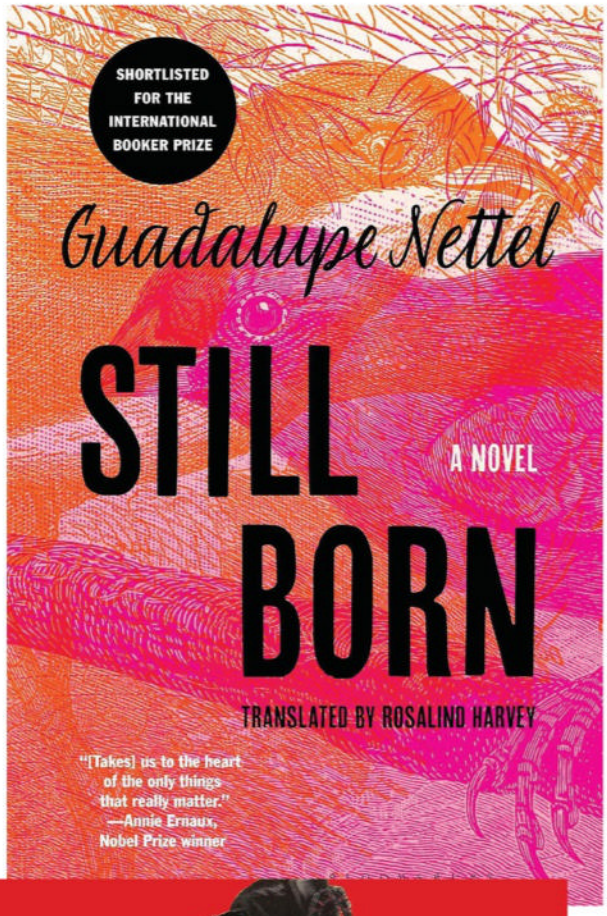
Part historical exploration, part imagined scenario for what went on behind the scenes of the Pinochet dictatorship, this multilayered novel weaves the narrator's own dark obsession with the questions and guilt that haunt all survivors.

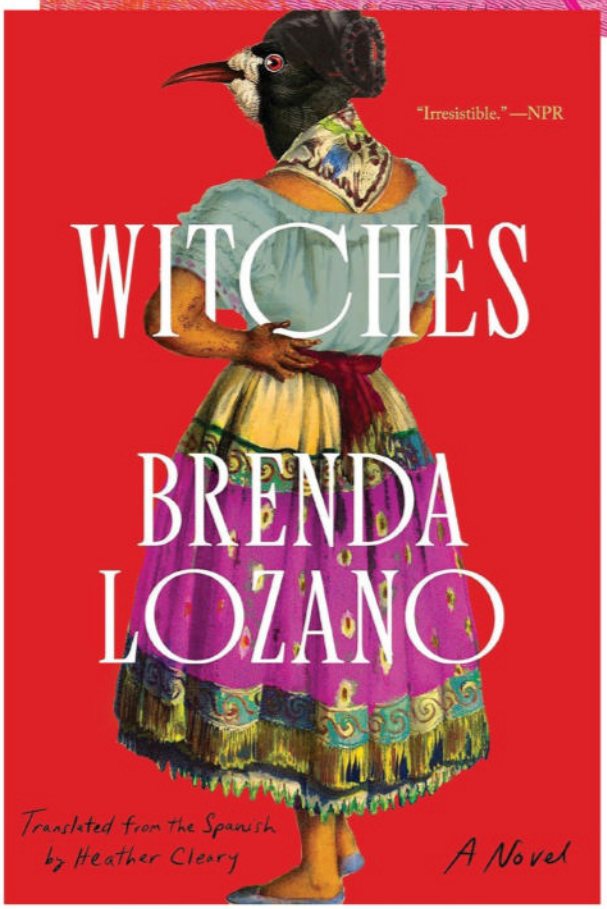
Undiscovered. By Gabriele Wiener. Tr. by Julia Sanches. 2023. HarperVia.

This work of autofiction pushes all kinds of boundaries as Peruvian author Wiener wrestles with her father's death, examining his life of duplicity and love as well as the legacy of her infamous maybe-ancestor huaquero/grave robber Charles Wiener. She then delves deeply into her own choices as she works to dismantle patriarchy and colonization in her life.

Witches. By Brenda Lozano. Tr. by Heather Cleary. 2022. Catapult.

Lozano's novel centers on three different women from diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds—an educated journalist from Mexico City, a famous curandera from an Indigenous community, and a trans, or Muxe, woman from that same small village who has been murdered—while grappling with the oppression and violence of Mexico's patriarchy.


SHORTLISTED FOR THE INTERNATIONAL BOOKER PRIZE
Guadalupe Nettel
STILL BORN
A NOVEL
TRANSLATED BY ROSALIND HARVEY
"[Takes] us to the heart of the only things that really matter."
—Annie Ernaux, Nobel Prize winner



Essentials

Economy Explainers

by Susan Maguire

Stocks are down, tariffs are up, and wages are somewhere in between—but what does it all mean? These books will help readers get a handle on the complicated economy, ranging from a holistic view of the field to personal finance guides to an examination of the global supply chain. No matter what they're covering, these authors take a traditionally dry subject and cover it in an engaging way, all the better to help explain the economy.

The Banks We Deserve: Reclaiming Community Banking for a Just Economy. By Oscar Perry Abello. 2025. Island.

This slim volume punches way above its weight in examining the chasm between the financial needs of underserved urban communities—with special focus on local development and environmental sustainability—and a banking infrastructure often unable or outright unwilling to help them.

CRUSH Your Money Goals: 25 Smart Money Habits to Save, Invest, and Fast-Track Your Financial Freedom. By Bernadette Joy. 2024. Adams Media.

In this refreshing personal-finance guide, Joy leads readers through reflective stages, allowing them to define the best actions for their unique situations, from directing readers to consider what financial independence means for them to calculating their net worth, developing an awareness of spending intentionally, and healing money wounds.

Art from *Taxes 101* and *How to Teach Economics to Your Dog.*

How the World Ran Out of Everything: Inside the Global Supply Chain. By Peter S. Goodman. 2024. Mariner.

Remember late 2020, when we were hoarding toilet paper and desperately searching for masks and baby formula? Goodman looks at that time when goods seemed to be stuck in limbo in ports and warehouses and examines each part of the supply chain, making a strong case for reform.

How to Teach Economics to Your Dog: A Quirky Introduction. By Rebecca Campbell and Anthony McGowan. 2022. Oneworld.

Campbell, a lecturer at the London School of Economics, strolls with her and McGowan's Maltese, Monty, explaining markets, monopolies, and monetary policies while Monty fixates on acquiring treats. Concepts are built and reinforced over 17 excursions, resulting in a pleasantly undemanding, whimsical introduction to the economy.

Making It in America: The Almost Impossible Quest to Manufacture in the U.S.A. (and How It Got That Way). By Rachel Slade. 2024. Pantheon.

Slade follows one company's efforts to manufacture clothing in Portland, Maine, providing a wealth of background information on the rise and fall of manufacturing in America and telling a story of rebellious entrepreneurship, one full of hope and determination.

Taxes 101: From Understanding Forms and Filing to Using Tax Laws and Policies to Minimize Costs and Maximize Wealth, an Essential Primer on the U.S. Tax System. By Michele Cagan. 2024. Adams Media.

The Internal Revenue Code has been described as a Frankenstein's monster of legislation; in this reader-friendly guide, Cagan helps to elucidate and clarify the process dictated by that behemoth, describing how presidents have helped to shape and change tax policies and addressing both individual and small-business tax returns.

Working in the 21st Century: An Oral History of American Work in a Time of Social and Economic Transformation. By Mark Larson. 2024. Agate.

Updating Studs Terkel's seminal work, Larson interviewed dozens of workers in diverse vocations from across the nation to ferret out what inspires them to keep plugging away, exploring the impact that gig work, the COVID pandemic and work-from-home, and the rise of automation have on the working person.

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Widows' Memoirs on Navigating Grief & Life

by Donna Seaman

In *Memorial Days,* Pulitzer Prize–winning novelist Geraldine Brooks describes in striking detail the shock of her seemingly healthy husband's sudden death and her eventual journey to properly mourn on remote and beautiful Flinders Island, Australia. The other memoirs gathered here also tell gripping stories of loss, grief, and a new embrace of life.

Art from *Here After*.

Epilogue. By Anne Roiphe. 2008. HarperCollins.

After the death of her beloved husband of 39 years, Roiphe is unprepared for the abject loneliness that follows. Then her daughters run a singles ad on her behalf.

Here After. By Amy Lin. 2024. Zibby.

During the COVID lockdowns, Lin's 32-year-old husband died after running a half marathon. While navigating this loss, Lin received a serious medical diagnosis of her own.

Ghosting: A Widow's Voyage Out. By Barbara Lazear Ascher. 2021. Pushcart.

In sailing terms, to ghost is to make headway slowly when there appears to be no wind. Ascher writes beautifully of her struggles to find her place in the world after her husband, a physician and an avid sailor, dies of cancer.

Left on Tenth: A Second Chance at Life. By Delia Ephron. 2022. Little, Brown.

First she loses her cherished husband to prostate cancer, then her beloved-by-billions sister Nora dies from leukemia, the same disease Delia is diagnosed with—a series of traumas she recounts in this tour de force.

The Light of the World. By Elizabeth Alexander. 2015. Grand Central.

In this exquisitely distilled memoir, poet Alexander recounts her marriage to exuberantly creative Ficre Ghebreyesus, a painter, chef, gardener, and passionate reader from Eritrea; his sudden death; the fog of grief; her spiritual dilemmas; and her gradual emergence back into the light.

Tell Me a Story: My Life with Pat Conroy. By Cassandra King Conroy. 2019. Morrow.

When Cassandra King met Pat Conroy in the mid-nineties, a slow-dance courtship began between the former preacher's wife and the *Prince of Tides* author, launching a marriage that lasted until Pat's death in 2016.

An Unfinished Love Story: A Personal History of the 1960s. By Doris Kearns Goodwin. 2024. Simon & Schuster.

As speechwriter and advisor to JFK, RFK, and LBJ, Dick Goodwin wrote some of the most powerful speeches of the 1960s. He and Doris Kearns met in 1972 and were together until his death in 2018. Historian, biographer, and commentator Kearns Goodwin mines their vast trove of archival material to galvanizing effect.

A Widow's Story. By Joyce Carol Oates. 2011. Ecco.

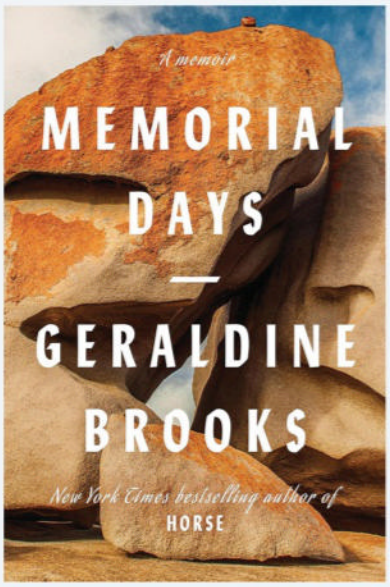
While Oates' fiction depicts violence, her creative inferno was sequestered from her joyful 48 years with her first husband, editor and publisher Raymond Smith. Oates recounts a horrific "siege" of grief and profound "pilgrimage" from chaos to coherence.

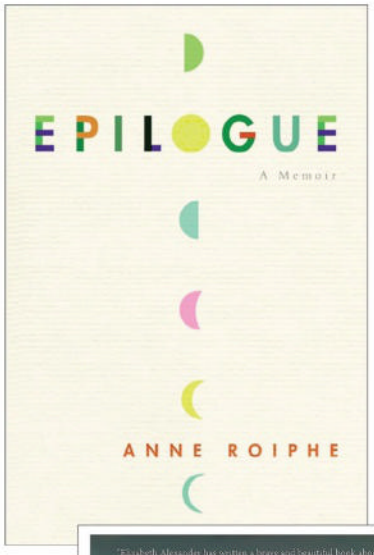
The Year of Magical Thinking. By Joan Didion. 2005. Vintage.

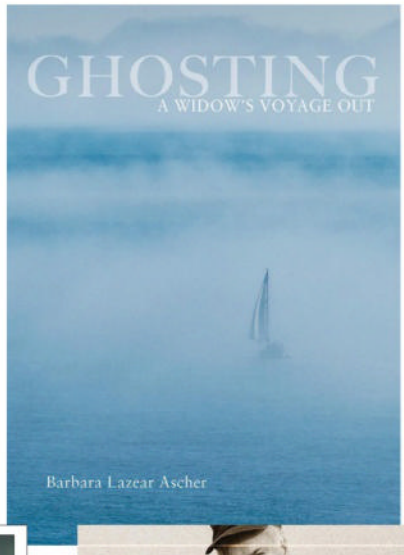
With their daughter in intensive care on Christmas, Didion and her husband, the writer John Gregory Dunne, came home from the hospital, sat down to dinner, and Dunne died from "a sudden massive coronary event." Didion offers a remarkably lucid and ennobling anatomy of grief.

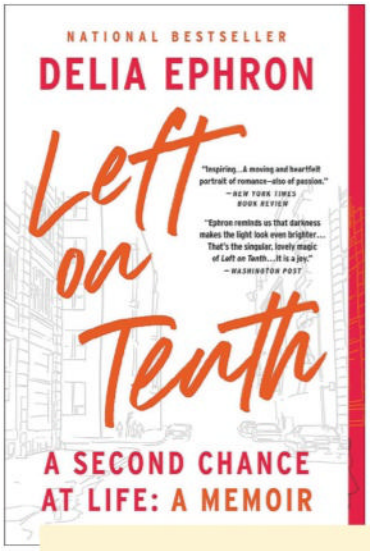
Memorial Days: A Memoir. By Geraldine Brooks. 2025. Viking.

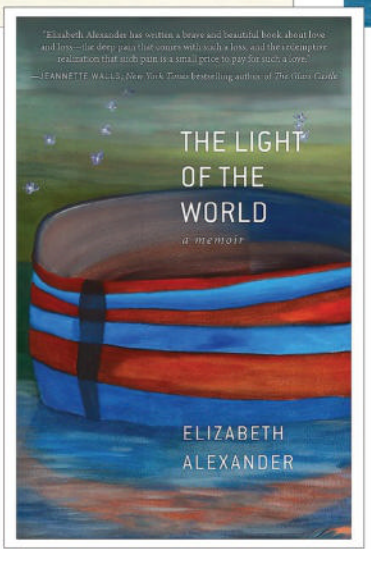
Brooks was working on her novel *Horse* (2022) when her fit and vital husband, writer Tony Horwitz, died on Memorial Day in Washington, DC, while on book tour. She was alone in their home on Martha's Vineyard when she received the shocking news, the start to a long, anguished, sometimes surreal, often infuriating ordeal with the bureaucracy of death. After several years of concealing her sorrow in "one endless, exhausting performance" of normalcy, Brooks finally asserted her "right to grieve," embarking on her own "memorial days" by returning to her home country, Australia, and retreating to remote, wild, and haunted Flinders Island. In this rinsed-clean memoir, Brooks tells her story leading up to her meeting Tony and after as they "vagabonded as foreign correspondents" in war zones in the Middle East and Libya, then settled down to raise their two sons and write books, intricately entwined in every aspect of life. On Flinders Island, Brooks discovers another side to Tony as she reads his journals. Reflecting on mourning rituals in various traditions, while chronicling the dramatic, lonesome, and restorative beauty and spirit of the island, Brooks, with arresting precision, sensitivity, and candor, takes deep soundings of her grief and evolving perceptions and feelings in a generous and resonant remembrance. —*Donna Seaman*

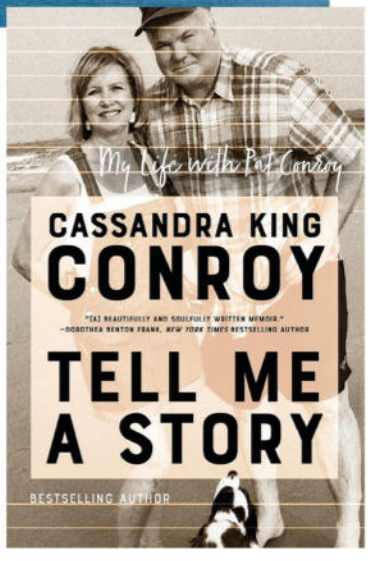


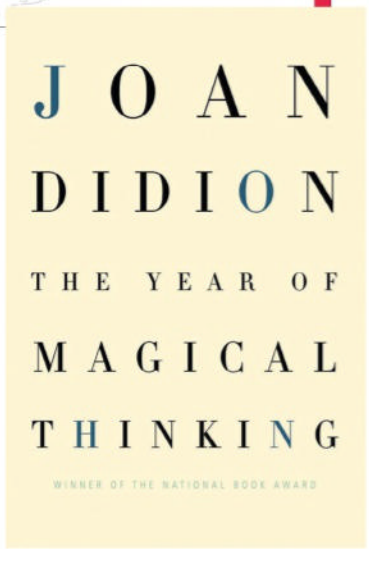












Reserve These Reads

Adult

Get your hands on these hotly anticipated books, all out this month.

Fiction

Atmosphere: A Love Story. By Taylor Jenkins Reid. Ballantine.

A professor selected to go on a 1984 NASA expedition, and the men and women who will join her on the mission, form the cast of Reid's (*Daisy Jones & the Six*, 2019) next character-driven novel.

Bury Our Bones in the Midnight Soil. By V. E. Schwab. Tor.

The latest from Schwab (*The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue*, 2020; *The Fragile Threads of Power*, 2023) is a genre-defying powerhouse, following three young women in three different time lines whose lives entangle in unexpected ways.

Art from *Atmosphere*.

Art from *Flashlight*.

El Dorado Drive. By Megan Abbott. Putnam.

Two sisters get involved in a women-supporting-women pyramid scheme with potentially deadly results in Abbott's next twisty, perceptive thriller.

The First Gentleman. By Bill Clinton and James Patterson. Little, Brown.

The former president and the mega-superstar thriller author are back with another collaboration (after *The President's Daughter*, 2021), in which a pair of investigative journalists look into the new president's husband, who is on trial for murder.

Flashlight. By Susan Choi. Farrar.

A father's long-ago disappearance reverberates in Choi's first novel since the National Book Award–winning *Trust Exercise* (2019).

Fox. By Joyce Carol Oates. Hogarth.

Oates' provocative latest (after *Flint Kill Creek*, 2024) follows a charming teacher with a dark, dark secret who lands a job at a prestigious New Jersey prep school in a crime novel told from the perspectives of the predator and the prey.

King of Ashes. By S. A. Cosby. Flatiron/Pine & Cedar.

Inspired by *The Godfather*, Cosby's next thriller combines family drama—three siblings coming together after their father's accident—with a Southern crime underworld.

The Listeners. By Maggie Stiefvater. Viking.
In her adult debut, superstar YA author Stiefvater takes readers to WWII-era West Virginia and a hotel that is secretly housing captured Nazi officials for the State Department.

Murder Takes a Vacation. By Laura Lippman. Morrow.
Noir takes a vacation as the assistant to Lippman's star sleuth Tess Monaghan, Mrs. Blossom, books a luxury cruise down the Seine where she finds romance and danger.

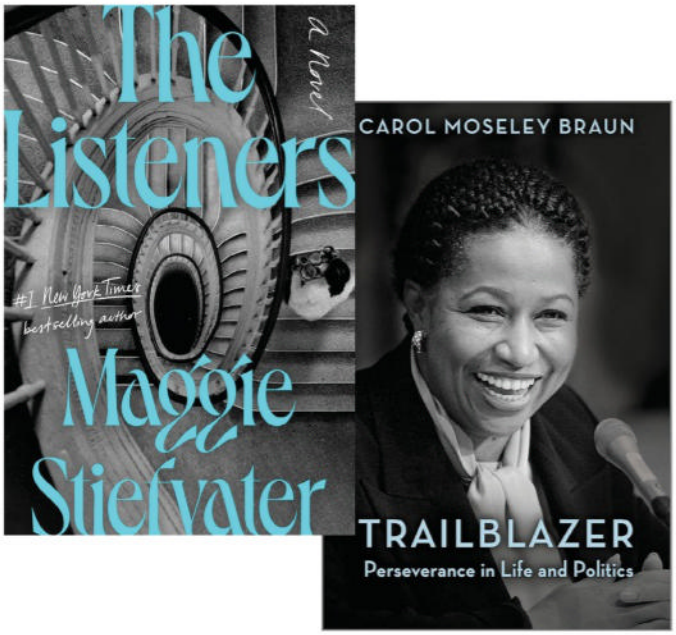
Park Avenue. By Renée Ahdieh. Flatiron.
YA author Ahdieh's adult debut follows the family behind an influential Korean beauty brand as they divorce, back-stab, and keep secrets, as told through the eyes of a young lawyer charged with managing a potentially company-destroying crisis.

The Phoenix Pencil Company. By Allison King. Morrow.
This cross-generational debut traces the life of a reclusive coder in the present and that of her grandmother in WWII Shanghai, where she and her cousin discover the family's special powers.

The Poppy Fields. By Nikki Erlick. Morrow.
Four strangers and a little dog journey west to a research center in the California desert that promises a cure for grief—patients literally sleep away the sense of loss—but there are untold side effects. Erlick's debut, *The Measure* (2022), was an instant best-seller and a Read with Jenna pick.

So Far Gone. By Jess Walter. Harper.
Seven years after taking to the woods following the 2016 election–induced assault of his son-in-law, a man emerges to track down his daughter and grandchildren in the very America he's been hiding from.

Sunny Side Up. By Kate Sturino. Celadon.
The first novel from Megababe founder and body-acceptance advocate Sturino introduces Manhattan divorcée Sunny Greene, who's just trying to find a good man and clothes that fit.



Nonfiction

How to Be Heard. By Roxane Gay. Harper.
Author and cultural critic Gay (*Bad Feminist*, 2014; *Hunger*, 2017; *Opinions*, 2023) turns her keen eye to writing instruction, offering aspiring authors practical advice and inspiration with humor and warmth, assuring all that their voices deserve to be heard.

Trailblazer: Perseverance in Life and Politics. By Carol Moseley Braun. Hanover Square.
She was the first Black woman elected to the Senate, but that's just the tip of the iceberg in Moseley Braun's storied political career, which she recounts here in her first memoir, beginning with a childhood on the South Side of Chicago and marching with Martin Luther King Jr.

Art from *Sunny Side Up*.

June 2025

The Top Ten Adult Fiction and Nonfiction Chosen Monthly by America's Library Staff

LIBRARY READS

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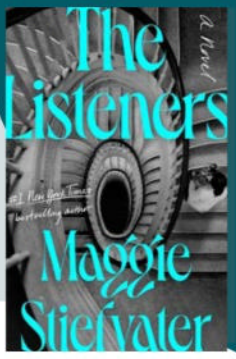
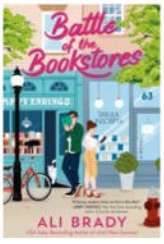


The Listeners: A Novel
Maggie Stiefvater
(Viking)

TOP PICK

Joan is the manager of a resort hotel in West Virginia. Life is good until the U.S. is pulled into WWII and the hotel's only guests are detained Axis diplomats. While Joan is very good at keeping secrets, this adds strain on the staff. Readers who adored Stiefvater's YA books will welcome this historical fiction that reads like a classic spy thriller.

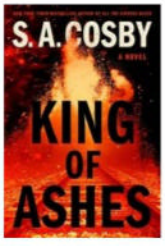
—Kimberly McGee, Lake Travis Community Library, Austin, TX
NoveList read-alike: *In the Country of Others* by Leila Slimani



Battle of the Bookstores
Ali Brady
(Berkley)

When their boss decides to merge their beloved bookstores, romance-reader Ryan and literary "Ice Queen" Josie vie for the title of bookstore manager. Readers will enjoy the witty banter, loveable cast of characters, spicy scenes, literary references, and the representation of the romance genre and romance bookstores as inclusive stories and places for anyone and everyone to find themselves.

—Dana Treichler, Princeton Public Library, NJ
NoveList read-alike: *Love to Hate You* by Marina Adair



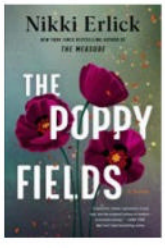
King of Ashes
S.A. Cosby
(Flatiron Books: Pine & Cedar)

The Carruthers are a family living with multiple secrets and the trauma of losing their mother while the siblings were still young. When Roman, the oldest brother, returns home after their father is in a terrible accident, he gets drawn into gang warfare trying to protect his family. This page-turner is full of secrets.

—Linda Quinn, Eastham Public Library, MA
NoveList read-alike: *Sins of Survivors* by Underwood/McClean

The Witch Roads
Kate Elliott
(Tor Books)
Deputy courier Elen's journey across the Tranquil Empire in service to a haughty and haunted prince is a tale thick with political intrigue, family secrets, class hierarchy, dangerous escapes, and a deeply strange and touching friendship. Elliott captures the spirit of epic fantasy with a moving story, compelling characters, and a world full of ancient magic begging to be explored.

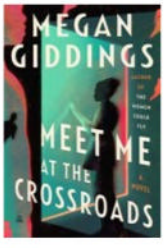
—James Ludy, New Canaan Library, CT
NoveList read-alike: *Road to Ruin* by Hana Lee



The Poppy Fields
Nikki Erlick
(William Morrow)

What if you could sleep your way through grief, but there was a chance you'd forget about the love you shared with a loved one? Four strangers make a trip to a remote sleep lab, each with a different reason for their journey. This touching novel is a tribute to the resilience of the human heart and the journeys we all must go through to heal.

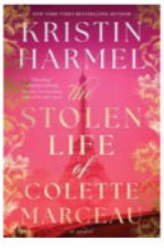
—Jennifer Winberry, LibraryReads Ambassador, NJ
NoveList read-alike: *The Seven O'Clock Club* by Amelia Ireland



Meet Me at the Crossroads
Megan Giddings
(Amistad)

Seven mysterious doors suddenly appear in different places across the globe, and when they open, they appear to lead to new dimensions in the universe. Two Black twin sisters get caught in the mystery as one sees paradise while the other sees peril. A spellbinding story about the choices that can both bring us together and tear us apart.

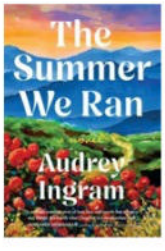
—Magan Szwarek, LibraryReads Ambassador, IL
NoveList read-alike: *Last to Leave the Room* by Caitlin Starling



The Stolen Life of Colette Marceau
Kristin Harmel
(Gallery Books)

This dual-timeline WWII saga tells the story of a feisty young Parisian woman learning the family legacy of jewel thievery, taking from the undeserving wealthy to help those in need. Harmel brilliantly creates absorbing characters, harrowing scenes, and, ultimately, goodness in a tale full of twists, moral dilemmas, and the enduring power of forgiveness.

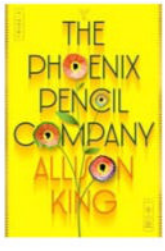
—Ron Block, Cuyahoga County Public Library, OH
NoveList read-alike: *The Best of Lupin* by Maurice LeBlanc



The Summer We Ran: A Novel
Audrey Ingram
(Zibby Publishing)

This compelling romance alternates between two timelines, propelling the story along and driving readers to find out how Grant and Tess go from teenagers in love to gubernatorial candidates with opposing political views who haven't seen each other for 25 years. Secrets and complicated family dynamics make this a page-turning summer read.

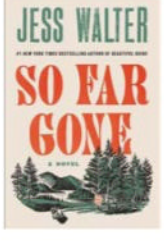
—Amy Lapointe, Amherst Town Library, NH
NoveList read-alike: *Same Time, Next Summer* by Annabel Monaghan



The Phoenix Pencil Company
Allison King
(William Morrow)

Monica is determined to reunite her beloved Grandmother Yun with her long-lost cousin after learning about her family's talent for imbuing ordinary pencils with extraordinary magic, capable of bringing memories to life. The way the author weaves together multiple generations and their intertwined stories creates a compelling saga spanning time and cultures.

—Tamara English, Derby Public Library, KS
NoveList read-alike: *A Thousand Times Before* by Asha Thanki

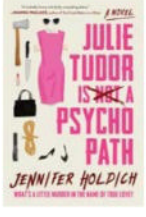


So Far Gone
Jess Walter
(Harper)

A zany thriller about a former journalist whose two grandchildren suddenly arrive at his door after their mother goes missing. He must then contend with the religious militia his son-in-law is involved in while tracking down his daughter. A heartfelt story about feeling lost and burnt out—and finding a way forward and re-connecting.

—Julie Graham, Yakima Valley Libraries, WA
NoveList read-alike: *The Horse* by Willy Vlautin

Bonus pick:



Julie Tudor Is Not a Psychopath
Jennifer Holdich
(Sourcebooks Landmark)

Notable Nonfiction:

The River's Daughter: A Memoir
Bridget Crocker
(Spiegel & Grau)

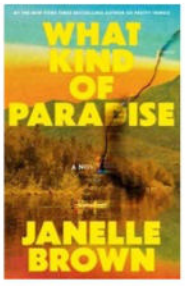
Be sure to check out our social media for the Bonus Pick annotations!

Made in LibraryAware - www.libraryaware.com

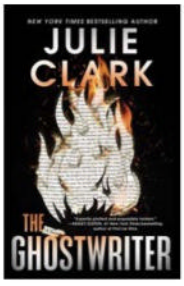
June 2025
HALL OF FAME TITLES

The LibraryReads Hall of Fame designation honors authors who have had multiple titles appear on the monthly list since 2013.

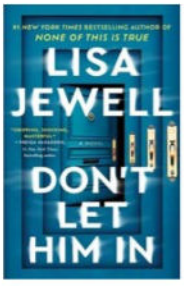
Find out more at www.LibraryReads.org/HOF



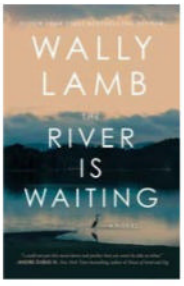
What Kind of Paradise: A Novel
Janelle Brown
(Random House)



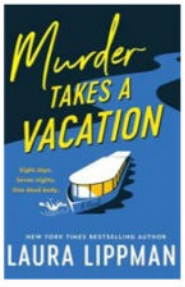
The Ghostwriter
Julie Clark
(Sourcebooks Landmark)



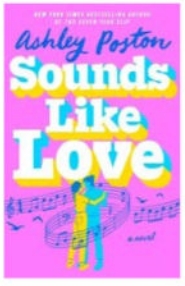
Don't Let Him In
Lisa Jewell
(Atria Books)



The River Is Waiting
Wally Lamb
(Simon Element)

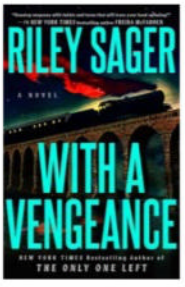


Murder Takes a Vacation
Laura Lippman
(William Morrow)

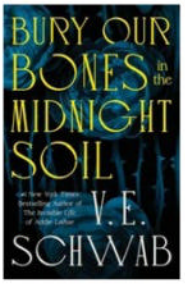


Sounds Like Love
Ashley Poston
(Berkley)

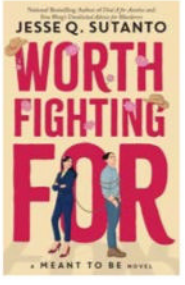
Atmosphere: A Love Story
Taylor Jenkins Reid
(Ballantine Books)



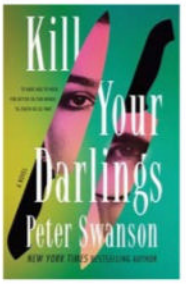
With a Vengeance: A Novel
Riley Sager
(Dutton)



Bury Our Bones in the Midnight Soil
V. E. Schwab
(Tor Books)



Worth Fighting For: A Meant to Be Novel
Jesse Q. Sutanto
(Hyperion Avenue)



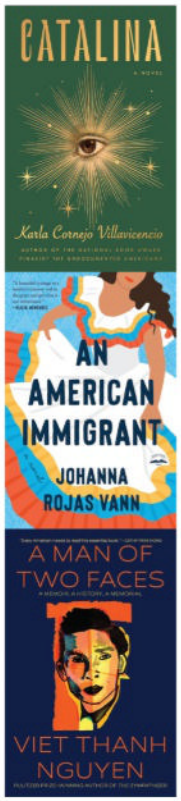
Kill Your Darlings
Peter Swanson
(William Morrow)

PBS BOOKS

Immigrant Heritage Month

June is Immigrant Heritage Month. It's a time to recognize and celebrate the contributions of immigrants and their diverse cultures and promote understanding and appreciation for the immigrant experience. Here are book recommendations to celebrate:

Catalina, by Karla Cornejo Villavicencio.
A National Book Award finalist and one of the first undocumented immigrants to graduate from Harvard, Karla reveals the hidden lives of those too often overlooked. Her story explores the experiences of Catalina, a wry and vulnerable Harvard student who is forced to navigate the past. This novel explores the immigrant experience, following her work, *The Undocumented Americans*.



A Man of Two Faces, by Viet Thanh Nguyen.
Pulitzer Prize–winner Viet writes an unconventional memoir. With sharp wit and deep feeling, he confronts the trauma of war, refugeehood, and growing up between cultures.

An American Immigrant, by Johanna Rojas Vann.
This book explores the journey of a young journalist navigating identity, family secrets, and the immigrant experience. This coming-of-age story celebrates resilience and belonging. It is a story of culture and community and of embracing our culture and the generations that have come before.

Let's read, reflect, and celebrate the many voices that make America a proud and culturally diverse nation. Visit pbsbooks.org for more.

PBS BOOKS READERS CLUB

This month, PBS Books Readers Club delves into an array of murder mystery books that have been featured in shows on *Masterpiece Mystery*! These cozy shows are set in quaint villages and feature amateur sleuths. The stories are filled with agreeable puzzles, likeable characters, gentle romance, and beautiful settings—yet they all include "feel-good murder." Our hosts will explore the art of crafting murder mystery novels. You'll hear from Anthony Horowitz, author of *Magpie Murders* and *Moonflower Murders*; Robert Thorogood, author of *The Marlow Murder Club*; and *Grantchester*'s writer, Daisy Coulam. Don't miss the show on Wednesday, June 25 at 8 p.m. ET. Go to pbsbooks.org/readersclub.

This show complements a PBS June program that also focuses on *Masterpiece Mystery*!

Program Highlights

Deep Questions Call For . . .

As we contemplate deeply important questions, many turn to books . . . yet, we suggest that you turn to your trusted PBS station. On Monday, June 9 at 10 p.m. ET, PBS will premiere the first segment of the new docuseries *Wisdom Keepers*, which explores the timeless questions of who we are and where we are going. In our twenty-first century world of rapid scientific advances, moral dilemmas, and political unrest, its questions enable the viewer to reflect on lifelong questions. Through intimate interviews with leading thinkers, mystics, historians, ethicists, faith leaders, and scientists, the series invites viewers into a space of deep introspection rarely found in our fast-paced lives. The series will be hosted by acclaimed journalist Ray Suarez; featured guests include Richard Rohr, Kelly Brown Douglas, Kwame Anthony Appiah, and more. After June 9, all parts of the docuseries will be available on the PBS app to stream on demand.

Many libraries will host screeners and conversations, as well as feature booklists inspired by the conversations. Visit pbsbooks.org/wisdomkeepers to learn more.

Caregiving Launch

Executive producer Bradley Cooper, in collaboration with WETA and PBS, created *Caregiving*, which highlights the challenges and triumphs of caregiving in America. It will premiere on Tuesday, June 24 at 9 p.m. ET on PBS and on the PBS YouTube Channel. The two-hour documentary is centered on the personal experiences of caregivers providing for loved ones, and the challenges and triumphs they face each day. Don't miss it.

Must Listen

Sure-Bet Narrators

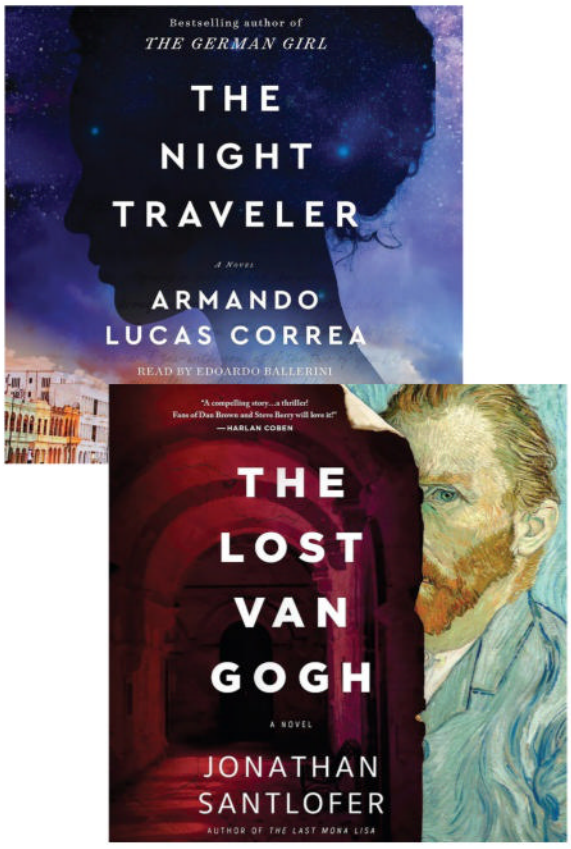
by Heather Booth

When time for browsing is short and you need to choose a great audiobook quickly, look for these names. Our sure-bet-narrator list is a who's who of audiobook celebrity, full of voices that are frequent award winners, *Booklist Voice of Choice* narrators, and favorites across genres.

Edoardo Ballerini

"Voice is such an intimate instrument to me, akin to touch or eye contact," Ballerini told *Booklist*. That intimacy comes through with incisive clarity in his recordings, which range from classics to crime fiction and everything in between.

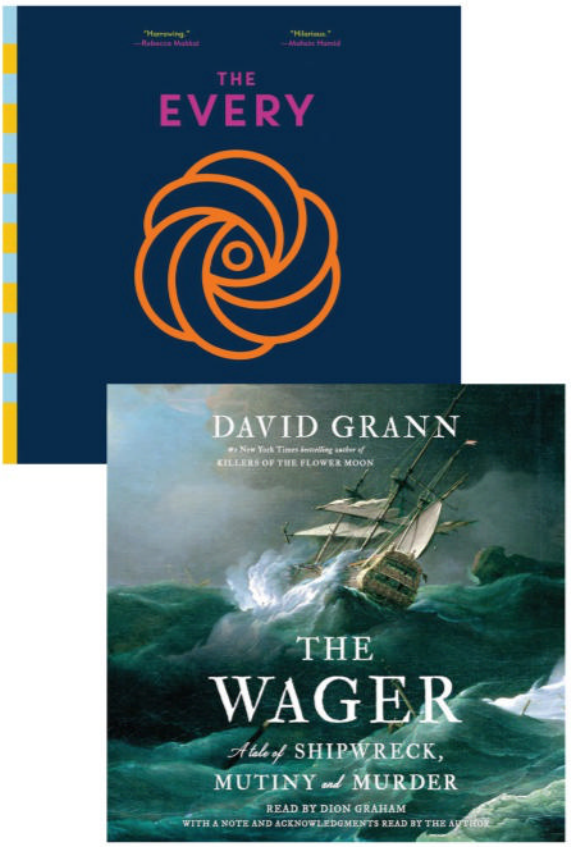
- **The Lost Van Gogh.** By Jonathan Santlofer. 2024. Brilliance.
- **The Night Travelers.** By Armando Lucas Correa. 2023. Simon & Schuster Audio.
- **Tao Te Ching.** By Lao-Tzu. 2018. Books on Tape.



Dion Graham

Graham sets the standard for high-quality narration with his passionate commitment to his craft and attention to detail. His credo demands that he "tell the story, be open to creative impulses, respond to the text, and trust my instincts."

- **Devil Is Fine.** By John Vercher. 2024. Macmillan Audio.
- **The Every.** By Dave Eggers. 2021. Books on Tape.
- **The Wager:** A Tale of Shipwreck, Mutiny and Murder. By David Grann. 2023. Books on Tape.



Fiona Hardingham

Her patient and expert pacing, gorgeous accent work, and insightful interpretations of younger characters make Hardingham a narrator whose work will always satisfy and who is especially noted for her performances of youth fiction.

- **And I Darken.** By Kiersten White. 2016. Listening Library.
- **Isola.** By Allegra Goodman. 2025. Books on Tape.
- **Surprise Me.** By Sophie Kinsella. 2018. Books on Tape.

Bahni Turpin

Whether she's narrating audiobooks for youth or adults, fiction or nonfiction, Turpin fashions aural soundscapes that transport listeners into the lives of the characters she portrays.

- **Dear Miss Metropolitan.** By Carolyn Ferrell. 2021. Macmillan.
- **Moon Witch, Spider King.** By Marlon James. 2022. Books on Tape.
- **The Survivalists.** By Kashana Cauley. 2022. Brilliance.

Simon Vance

Vance's crisp British accent makes him a natural choice for titles from across the pond, but he is equally adept with French, Spanish, and Italian accents. Asked about dialects, he claims his skills are a result of "research and preparation" and a "good ear and a versatile tongue."

- **Pinquickle's Folly.** By R. A. Salvatore. 2024. Simon & Schuster Audio.
- **Something to Hide.** By Elizabeth George. 2022. Books on Tape.
- **Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy.** By John le Carré. 2024. Dreamscape.

Julia Whelan

A frequent narrator of book-group titles and relationship fiction, Whelan is regularly attached to top-tier novels. Her characterization skills are vast, often letting readers forget they're listening to a single voice.

- **Expiration Dates.** By Rebecca Serle. 2024. Simon & Schuster Audio.
- **Funny Story.** By Emily Henry. 2024. Books on Tape.
- **Thank You for Listening.** By Julia Whelan. 2022. HarperAudio.

Art from *Expiration Dates.*

SUMMER AUDIO
BINGO
By Heather Booth
A full cast narration
A new recording of a classic
A Booklist Reader suggestion
An audio original
An award-winning audio
A graphic novel or play on audio
Hard in print, easier on audio
An audiobook suggestion from your library
Audiobook by a podcaster
Listen to your book on a walk
Try different headphones
Listen on your commute
FREE SPACE
An audio you found in your library's app
Romance in two voices
Memoir in the author's voice
Listen to poetry
Be a narrator! Try reading aloud
Audio narrated by a celebrity
Listen with varied speeds
Make a "TBL" list in your library's download app
Share an audio suggestion with a friend
Audio under four hours
Listen to a new release
A book read by your favorite narrator

Summer reading bingo is for audiobooks, too! For many of the squares on the facing page, full lists of recommendations are available from previous *Booklist* issues in our online archives. For the trickier categories, we suggest you start with these standouts from recent years.

Audio Makes It ~~Easy~~ Easier

These titles are notoriously difficult to read in print, but listening on audio can help demystify these stellar novels and play.

- **Finnegans Wake.** By James Joyce. Read by Barry McGovern and Marcella Riordan. 2021. Naxos.
- **Lincoln in the Bardo.** By George Saunders. Read by a full cast. 2017. Books on Tape.
- **Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead.** By Tom Stoppard. Read by a full cast. 2022. L.A. Theatre Works.
- **Stella Maris.** By Cormac McCarthy. Read by Julia Whelan and Edoardo Ballerini. 2022. Books on Tape.

Author-Narrated Memoir

Sometimes the story is best told by the person who lived it. In these emotional and poignant memoirs, the authors' experiences shine through in their voices.

- **Dinner for Vampires:** Life on a Cult TV Show (While Also in an Actual Cult!). Written and read by Bethany Joy Lenz. 2024. Simon & Schuster Audio.
- **Dirtbag Queen.** Written and read By Andy Corren. 2025. Hachette Audio.
- **Knife:** Meditations after an Attempted Murder. Written and read by Salman Rushdie. 2024. Books on Tape.
- **A Well-Trained Wife:** My Escape from Christian Patriarchy. Written and read by Tia Levings. 2024. Macmillan Audio.

Celebrity Narrators

It's always exciting to see a big name behind the mic on an audiobook. But these stars of the screen are so incisive in their narrations, we can forget they're celebrities and sink into the story.

- **Long Island.** By Colm Tóibín. Read by Jessie Buckley. 2024. Simon & Schuster Audio.
- **Pachinko.** By Min Jin Lee. Read by Sandra Oh and the author. 2024. Hachette Audio.
- **The Secret History of the Rape Kit:** A True Crime Story. By Pagan Kennedy. Read by Claire Danes. 2025. Books on Tape.
- **Tom Lake.** By Ann Patchett. Read by Meryl Streep. 2023. HarperAudio.

Phenomenal Full Casts

Every narrator in each of these standout titles pulls their character forth for a truly memorable, cohesive audiobook experience.

- **Anita de Monte Laughs Last.** By Xochitl Gonzalez. 2024. Macmillan Audio.
- **The Future.** By Naomi Alderman. 2023. Simon & Schuster Audio.
- **Know Your Newlywed.** By Heather Taylor and others. 2024. Simon & Schuster Audio.
- **Wandering Stars.** By Tommy Orange. 2024. Books on Tape.

Romance in Two Voices

As the great love song goes, "It takes two to make a thing go right." And boy, do these get it right, with dual narrations creating unified partnerships.

- **Birding with Benefits.** By Sarah T. Dubb. Read by Mia Hutchinson-Shaw and Evan Sibley. 2024. Simon & Schuster Audio.
- **Curves for Days.** By Laura Moher. Read by Paul Bellantoni and Michelle Price. 2023. Dreamscape.
- **The Rewind.** By Allison Winn Scotch. Read by Julia Whelan and MacLeod Andrews. 2022. Books on Tape.
- **Second Chances in New Port Stephen.** By TJ Alexander. Read by Aden Hakimi and Feodor Chin. 2023. Simon & Schuster Audio.

Short and Sweet

At under five hours each, these lovely little audios can be consumed start-to-finish in a single day.

- **Love & Saffron.** By Kim Fay. Read by a full cast. 2022. Books on Tape.
- **Smitten Kitchen Keepers:** A Kitchen Counter Conversation. By Deb Perelman. Read by the author. 2024. Random House.
- **Three Days in June.** By Anne Tyler. Read by J. Smith-Cameron. 2025. Books on Tape.
- **Vanishing Treasures:** A Bestiary of Extraordinary Endangered Creatures. By Katherine Rundell. Read by Lenny Henry and the author. 2024. Books on Tape.

Funny Family Listens

by Heather Booth

Sun's out, school's out, and it's a great time for laugh-out-loud audio and humorous plots to entertain the kiddos and give parents a chuckle too.

Bhai for Now. By Maleeha Siddiqui. Read by Shawn K. Jain. 2022. Scholastic. Gr. 3–7.

Shaheer and Ashar discover that they're twin brothers and hatch a scheme to pull a *Parent Trap*–like switch, impersonating one another to meet the parents they've never known. Listeners will enjoy Jain's narration as he pulls off the trick of playing two different personalities. Details of Pakistani immigrant culture are woven throughout, and fans of Gordon Korman's realistic fiction will be pleased.

Julieta and the Diamond Enigma. By Luisana Duarte Armendáriz. Read by a full cast. 2021. Live Oak. Gr. 3–5.

For listeners who'd like Ramona Quimby even more if she helped Interpol solve art heists, meet Julieta! Julieta's parents work in the world of international art museums, and she jumps in to solve the mystery when the famed Regent Diamond is stolen. Facts about Paris, art history, mythology, and culture are woven into the plot, and Julieta's excitement for new knowledge is contagious to the listener.

Mossbelly MacFearsome and the Dwarves of Doom. By Alex Gardiner. Read by Ryan Ireland. 2019. Brilliance. Gr. 4–7.

The narrator gives each character a distinct English or Scottish accent and a voice perfectly suited to highlight the humor and action of this adventure between an ordinary boy named Roger and a fierce dwarf named Mossbelly MacFearsome.

Stuck in the Stone Age. By Geoff Rodkey. Read by a full cast. 2018. Recorded Books. Gr. 5–8.

A wanna-be scientist, a *real* scientist, and a time machine combine for big laughs and bigger adventure. Aspiring authors will be encouraged by this tale sponsored by the Story Pirates podcast with a plot inspired by an 11-year-old who appears as one of the narrators!

The Unbelievable Oliver and the Four Jokers. By Pseudonymous Bosch. Read by Marc Thompson. 2019. Listening Library. Gr. 2–4.

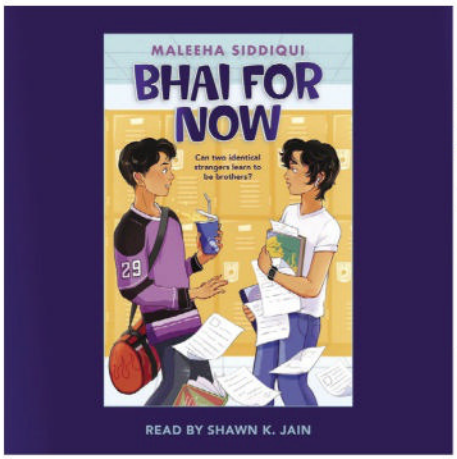
Oliver yearns to be a magician, but his skills are sorely lacking in this series opener with a raucously ridiculous one-man-show narration. With unrelenting gags, adventure, and a ton of character voices, listeners will be heartily entertained.

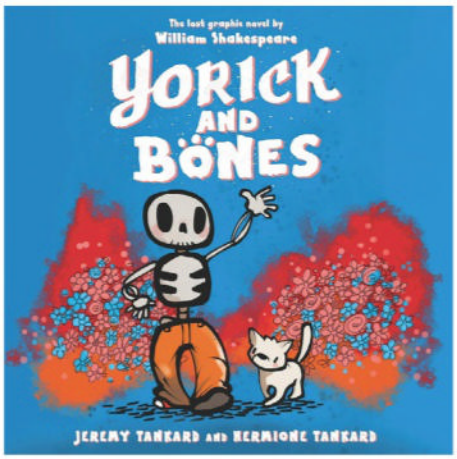
Wretched Waterpark. By Kiersten White. Read by Keylor Leigh. 2022. Listening Library. Gr. 3–6.

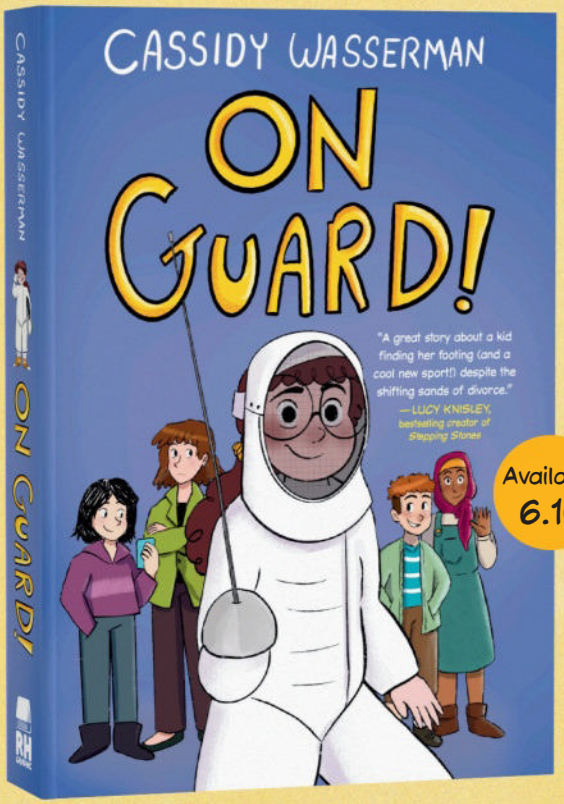
The Sinister-Winterbottom twins and their older sister, Wilhelmina, solve mysteries at creepy vacation destinations starting with Fathoms of Fun, a spooky, almost abandoned water park. The narrator's perfect balance of foreboding tones and deadpan humor make this a great listen-alike for Lemony Snicket fans.

Yorick and Bones. By Jeremy Tankard and Hermione Tankard. Read by a full cast. 2021. HarperAudio. Gr. 2–6.

A playful and hungry dog named Bones digs up a new friend—a skeleton named Yorick—in this graphic-novel series starter. The full cast delivers a stellar performance with a Shakespearean flair and plenty of sniffing, panting, growling, and barking from Bones.



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"A great story about a kid finding her footing (and a cool new sport!) despite the shifting sands of divorce."
—LUCY KNISLEY, bestselling creator of Stepping Stones
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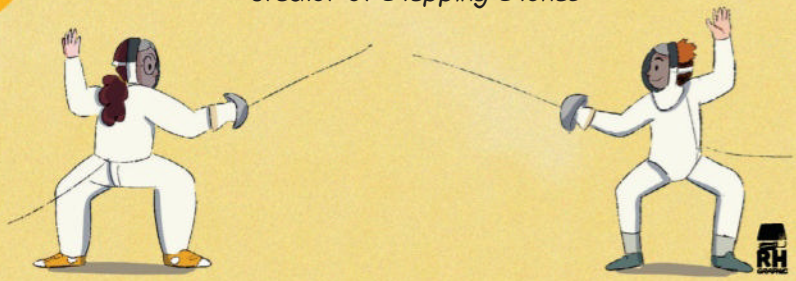
FENCE!

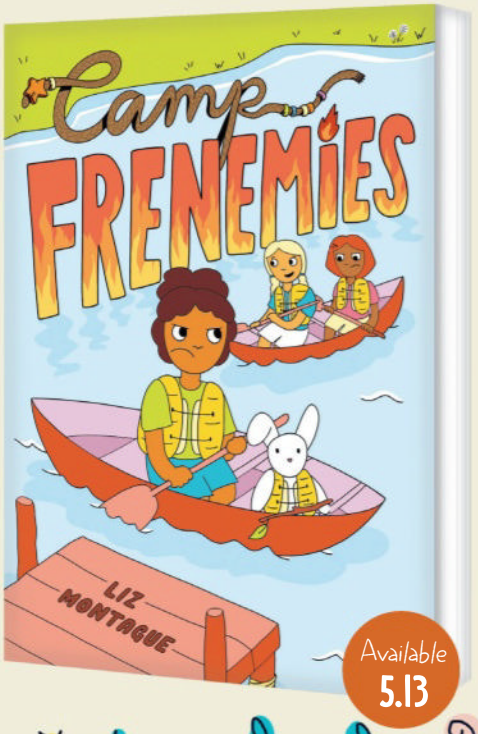
"A **great story about a kid finding her footing** (and a cool new sport!) despite the shifting sands of divorce."
–Lucy Knisley, *New York Times* bestselling creator of *Stepping Stones*



Art © 2025 by Cassidy Wasserman

MAKE ~~MEMORIES~~ ENEMIES UNDER THE STARS

From an acclaimed cartoonist comes a frenemies-to-friends graphic novel about the trials and tribulations of three preteen cabinmates at sleepaway camp. Perfect for fans of *Guts* and *Real Friends*!



Art © 2025 by Elizabeth Montague

Art from *Natsumi's Song of Summer.*

Essentials

Summertime Picture Books

by Sarah Hunter

Summer is a season of possibilities for kids, with time to fill with everything or nothing, depending on the day. From beach vacations to sweltering cities, abject boredom to the simple pleasure of family, these picture books capture the essence of summertime.

Big Family Beach Day. By Nina Crews. Illus. by the author. 2025. Greenwillow. PreS–Gr. 3.

In Crews' engaging picture book, Maya describes in vivid detail her biracial extended family's favorite summer outing: beach day.

Bubbles . . . Up! By Jacqueline Davies. Illus. by Sonia Sánchez. 2021. HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen. PreS–Gr. 3.

Dynamic artwork matches the effervescent mood in this story of a child enchanted by the underwater world at a community swimming pool, where bubbles rise up—and so do her spirits.

Cooler than Lemonade. By Harshita Jerath. Illus. by Chloe Burgett. 2023. Sourcebooks/Jabberwocky. K–Gr. 2.

The lemonade-stand competition is fierce on Eva and Aru's block, but instead of trying to one-up their neighbors, they set up a stand selling a family-favorite frozen treat.

A Day for Sandcastles. By JonArno Lawson. Illus. by Qin Leng. 2022. Candlewick. PreS–Gr. 2.

This wordless picture book with sunny, detailed illustrations celebrates the joys of the beach as it follows three siblings' efforts to build a sandcastle.

Fireworks. By Matthew Burgess. Illus. by Cátia Chien. 2025. Clarion. PreS–Gr. 2.

This energetic, poetic celebration of simple summer joys blends thrilling, dynamic illustrations with poignant, evocative text that palpably captures the sensations of a hot city day.

Grandma's Tipi: A Present-Day Lakota Story. By S. D. Nelson. Illus. by the author. 2023. Abrams. Gr. 1–3.

Clara is spending her first summer away from home with her grandmother and cousin, who live on the Standing Rock reservation. While typical kid activities abound, Clara also spends time learning about Lakota traditions, like raising the family tipi.

Hurricane. By John Rocco. Illus. by the author. 2021. Little, Brown. PreS–Gr. 2.

Rocco examines the effects of a hurricane, as seen through the eyes of a young boy in a coastal neighborhood, whose summery activities are interrupted by the sharp turn in the weather and the community's efforts to rebuild in the aftermath.

Mango Memories. By Sita Singh. Illus. by Nabi H. Ali. 2024. Random/Anne Schwartz. K–Gr. 3.

Summer means mango season for one girl and her family, but she's not quite big enough to harvest the fruits from the tree. She's disappointed but still gratified when she finally gets to taste the king of fruits.

Moon Pops. By Heena Baek. Illus. by the author. Tr. by Jieun Kiaer. 2021. Owlkids. PreS–Gr. 2.

This modern, whimsical spin on a classic Korean folktale takes place on a sweltering summer evening when it's so hot that even the Moon is melting. A clever granny collects the melted moon drops to make ice pops, which cool down the neighbors.

Natsumi's Song of Summer. By Robert Paul Weston. Illus. by Misa Saburi. 2020. Tundra. PreS–Gr. 2.

Natsumi is eager to welcome her American cousin, Jill, to her home in Japan for the summer and share her favorite things, like the sound of cicadas. But will Jill appreciate the thrumming of the cicadas' song? Dynamic artwork sets the scene for this gentle story.

Nothing Special. By Desiree Cooper. Illus. by Bec Sloane. 2022. Wayne State Univ. PreS–Gr. 3.

When Jax travels south from Detroit to visit his grandparents in Virginia for the summer, he and PopPop spend their time doing "nothing special," which turns out to be pretty wonderful.

Paletero Man. By Lucky Diaz. Illus. by Micah Player. Tr. by Carmen Tafolla. 2021. Harper. PreS–Gr. 2.

On a sweltering day, a Mexican American boy races through his neighborhood to get a cool treat from Paletero José. Rhythmic lines, bright artwork, and a bilingual Spanish and English text give this lots of appeal. Also available in Spanish.

Out into the Big Wide Lake. By Paul Harbridge. Illus. by Josée Bisaillon. 2021. Tundra. PreS–Gr. 3.

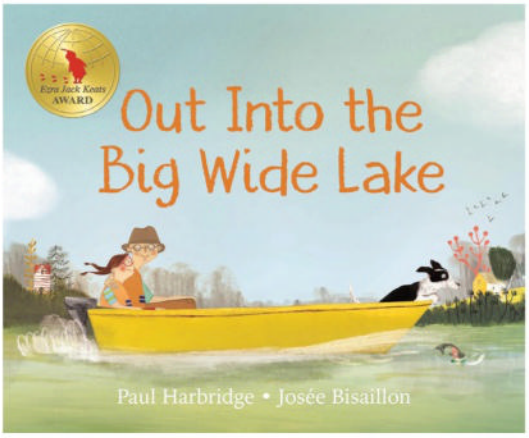
Kate, who has Down syndrome, spends the summer at her grandparents' home on a lake. She learns new skills and becomes more self-reliant when her grandpa needs help delivering groceries from a small boat.

Sari-Sari Summers. By Lynnor Bontigao. Illus. by the author. 2023. Candlewick. K–Gr. 2.

Nora's eager to spend the summer helping her grandmother at her shop, but when a heat wave keeps customers home, it's Nora's quick thinking—and an icy treat—that saves the day. A warm story of intergenerational love and Filipino culture.

See You Next Year. By Andrew Larsen. Illus. by Todd Stewart. 2015. Owlkids. Gr. 1–3.

A girl and her family take the same summer vacation every year, and she *loves* it. The same roads, the same beach,



the same motel—while it might seem like nothing much happens, per se, each moment is still magic to be cherished. Beachy, retro artwork is full of depth.

Summer Is for Cousins. By Rajani LaRocca. Illus. by Abhi Alwar. 2023. Abrams. PreS–Gr. 2.

Ravi's family, including aunts, uncles, and cousins, gathers together for an annual vacation in this picture book that celebrates summer fun. While rich in its inclusion of Indian American heritage, this shines in its depiction of a happy, extended-family gathering.

Summer Is Here. By Renée Watson. Illus. by Bea Jackson. 2024. Bloomsbury. PreS–Gr. 1.

Just about everything readers could wish for from a summer day is included in Watson's poetic tale of a day in the life of a girl among her friends and family, including a picnic, swimming, jumping rope, and getting a treat from the ice cream truck.

Sunrise Summer. By Matthew Swanson. Illus. by Robbi Behr. 2021. Macmillan/Imprint. K–Gr. 3.

Affectionately describing her atypical summer vacation, the narrator of this picture book recounts her summer spent fishing for salmon in Alaska with her family, when she's finally old enough to join the crew.

What If We . . .. By Vivienne Chang. Illus. by Eugenia Yoh. 2025. Little, Brown. PreS–Gr. 2.

It's the second day of summer, and Max is already bored. His little sister is eager to join in with any activity, but Max is constantly distracted by the thought that there's something more fun out there. Of course, there's lots of fun to be had just by being together.

When Lola Visits. By Michelle Sterling. Illus. by Aaron Asis. 2021. HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen. K–Gr. 3.

Lola's summer visit from the Philippines leads to a beautiful celebration of family and Filipino American culture in this poetic, brightly illustrated book, which captures both the joy of an extended-family visit and the ache when Lola has to finally return home.

Essentials

Middle-Grade Graphic Novel Space Adventures

by Sarah Hunter

From the silly (cats on the moon!) to the heartfelt (smart and capable kids proving to their parents they can handle anything) to the quietly weird (talking stars; interstellar mail delivery), the following sf adventures will satisfy a range of space-obsessed middle-graders looking for soaring imagination and inventive world building in an intergalactic package.

Astronautical! By Brooklin Stormie. Art by the author. 2025. Annick. Gr. 3–6.

Brothers Max and Lari are on a mission to rescue their father amid the floating pieces of their exploded planet, but in the course of their journey, Lari starts exhibiting some oddly celestial behavior. The *Adventure Time*–like energy is well matched by the bold, blocky artwork.

Blake Laser. By Keith Marantz and Larissa Brown. Art by Larissa Brown. 2024. HarperAlley. Gr. 3–7.

Blake Laser's parents are too busy working at the Interplanetary Space Control Center to notice that she's a bonafide science prodigy, but when they're captured while investigating an anomaly, Blake uses her wits and incredible inventions to rescue them.

Cosmic Cadets: Contact! By Ben Crane. Art by Andy Alves and Priscilla Tramontano. 2023. Top Shelf. Gr. 4–7.

Jimmil, son of the spaceship captain, has stumbled across a new alien race that communicates through feelings. But when the adults cause a big misunderstanding, can Jimmil smooth things over? Classic space-adventure tropes are boldly realized in Alves' and Tramontano's stylish artwork.

The First Cat in Space Ate Pizza. By Mac Barnett. Art by Shawn Harris. 2022. HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen. Gr. 2–5.

When evil rats from outer space begin eating Earth's moon, the only answer is to blast a cat in a space suit up there to deal with them. There's visual and tonal comedy in every panel of this gag-filled collaboration from two picture-book superstars.

Art from *Astronautical!*

Grace Needs Space! By Benjamin A. Wilgus. Art by Rii Abrego. 2023. Random/RH Graphic. Gr. 3–6.

This classic middle-grade plot of a kid being underestimated by their parent is thrillingly set on a space station and Saturn's moon Titan. Wilgus seamlessly incorporates space science into his high-concept plot about long-term space habitation and the nail-biting stakes when things go wrong.

Mr. Muffins, v.1: Defender of the Stars. By Ben Kahn. Art by Georgeo Brooks. 2025. Oni. Gr. 3–6.

When the galaxy needs a champion, who do you turn to? A cheerful corgi named Mr. Muffins, of course. Mr. Muffins and his person, Reuben, travel to another galaxy to protect an alien race from ruin in this comic that playfully blends comedy and space-battle action.

Once upon a Space-Time! By Jeffrey Brown. Art by the author. 2020. Crown. Gr. 3–6.

In the year 2216, humans are finally ready for galactic space travel, and since "adult humans can be pretty whiny," it's up to two kids to travel with the aliens on a research mission to Mars.

The Postman from Space. By Guillaume Perreault. Art by the author. Tr. by Françoise Bui. 2020. Holiday. Gr. 3–5.

Bob, an interplanetary postal worker, spends his days affably hopping from planet to quirky planet, but a new route makes him feel nervous. This quiet, low-key adventure features vivid, delightfully unusual artwork.

Space Chasers by Leland Melvin. By Leland Melvin and Joe Caramagna. Art by Alison Acton. 2025. First Second. Gr. 3–6.

Melvin, a former astronaut, brings his expertise to bear on this story about capable tinker Tia, who ends up in a NASA STEAM program for kids that goes awry when the team of middle-schoolers is accidentally launched into space with no adults.

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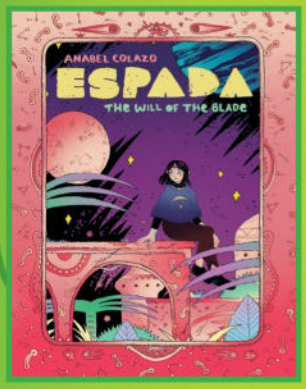

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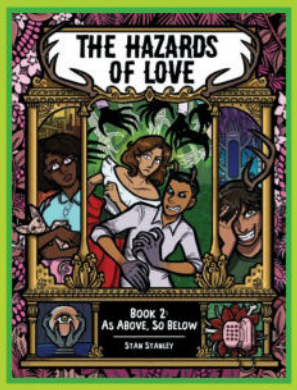

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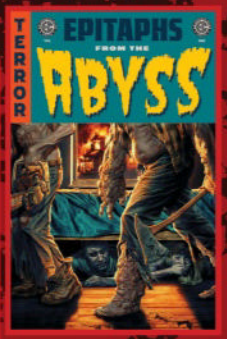

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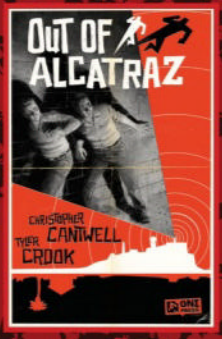

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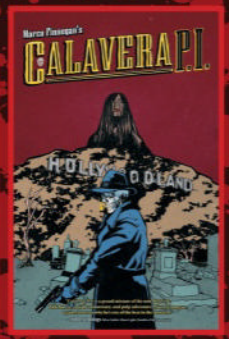

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Queer YA Graphic Novels

by Karis Rogerson

Regardless of how the characters in these young adult graphic novels identify on an individual basis, what they all have in common is this: they are queer. In a world that increasingly frowns upon any departure from the cishet norm, these books provide mirrors for teens who need to know they're not alone.

Across a Field of Starlight. By Blue Delliquanti. Art by the author. 2022. Random/RH Graphic. Gr. 9–12.

Lu and Fassen are the nonbinary main characters of this sf graphic novel. They face down war and long distances to reunite and fight an expanding empire.

As the Crow Flies. By Melanie Gillman. Art by the author. 2017. Iron Circus. Gr. 8–11.

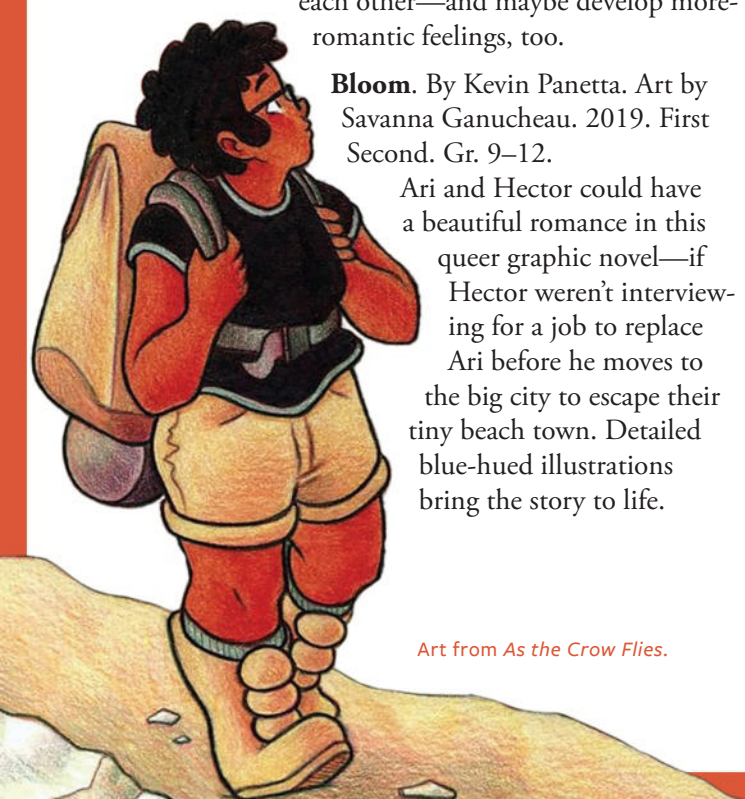
Charlie is feeling isolated not just because she's the only Black teen at the church camp in which this story takes place; she's also queer. But she might not be alone on that second front after all.

Blackwater. By Jeannette Arroyo and Ren Graham. Art by the authors. 2022. Holt. Gr. 8–11.

Blackwater, Maine, is the setting for a supernatural mystery in which tough-guy Tony and quiet Eli befriend each other—and maybe develop more-romantic feelings, too.

Bloom. By Kevin Panetta. Art by Savanna Ganucheau. 2019. First Second. Gr. 9–12.

Ari and Hector could have a beautiful romance in this queer graphic novel—if Hector weren't interviewing for a job to replace Ari before he moves to the big city to escape their tiny beach town. Detailed blue-hued illustrations bring the story to life.



Art from *As the Crow Flies.*

Check, Please! #Hockey. By Ngozi Ukazu. Art by the author. 2018. First Second. Gr. 9–12.

When Eric, a pastry-baking figure skater from Georgia, joins the college hockey team, he has to contend with a world totally different from what he's used to. Things get more complicated when his moody—and attractive—team captain gets thrown into the mix.

Constellations. By Kate Glasheen. Art by the author. 2023. Holiday. Gr. 8–12.

Claire is a queer teen battling addiction in the 1980s; the art style in this immersive graphic novel adds atmosphere and brings the story of Claire's fight for survival to life with deep emotion.

Mooncakes. By Suzanne Walker. Art by Wendy Xu. 2019. Oni. Gr. 8–12.

Tam and Nova are a teen werewolf and witch, respectively. When they are at their wits' end and facing down dark forces, Tam turns to Nova, and they battle those forces together while rekindling feelings for each other.

The Prince and the Dressmaker. By Jen Wang. Art by the author. 2018. First Second. Gr. 7–12.

In this fairy tale–like graphic novel, a young prince who loves to wear dresses finds the perfect solution when he meets a dressmaker who dreams of greatness. The vibrant art brings their secret collaboration and growing affection sweetly to life.

Stars in Their Eyes. By Jessica Walton. Art by Aśka and Bonaia Rosado. 2021. Scholastic. Gr. 7–12.

Maisie is excited to attend a fan convention for her favorite TV-show action hero. While there, she discovers an emergent crush in this love letter to fandom and nerdery that won a Stonewall Honor.

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SUBLIME

Graphic Adaptations of Classroom Reads

by Sarah Hunter

Whether students love them or hate them, summer reading lists are an enduring part of the school experience. Teens and tweens balking at spending their summers reading typical classroom books might be gratified to find there's a vast world of graphic adaptations available. While there's no replacing reading the original, these titles can ease the way into the stories and deepen readers' understanding with thoughtful perspectives and evocative artwork.

Art from *Anne Frank's Diary*.

Animal Farm: The Graphic Novel. By George Orwell and Odyr. Art by Odyr. 2019. Clarion. Gr. 9–12.

Orwell's allegory about abuses of power is a classroom staple, and this effective and affecting graphic adaptation helps emphasize its key themes and concepts in lush, painterly artwork.

Anne Frank's Diary: The Graphic Adaptation. By Ari Folman. Art by David Polonsky. 2018. Pantheon. Gr. 8–12.

Anne Frank's singular voice and vivid imagination are cornerstones of this exceptionally graceful adaptation of this important primary resource. Folman and Polonsky manage to honor the gravitas of Frank's experiences while never losing sight of her youthful concerns.

The Crossover. By Kwame Alexander. Art by Dawud Anyabwile. 2019. Clarion. Gr. 5–8.

Alexander's Newbery-winning novel in verse is adapted here in energetic form, blending poetry, prose, and artwork into an engaging transformation that reflects the original's emphasis on the power of words. Alexander's follow-up, *Booked*, was also adapted by Anyabwile in 2022.

The Giver. By Lois Lowry and P. Craig Russell. Art by P. Craig Russell. 2019. Clarion. Gr. 5–8.

Color is an essential symbol in Lowry's classic dystopian novel, and in his thoughtfully rendered artwork, Russell uses color to make the key emotional turns of Jonas' story palpable in startling new ways.

The Golden Compass: The Graphic Novel. By Philip Pullman and Stephane Melchior. Art by Clément Oubrerie. 2017. Knopf. Gr. 6–9.

Detailed artwork and thoughtful plotting streamline the first book in Pullman's expansive His Dark Materials series, adapted here. Melchior's adaptation of book 2, *The Subtle Knife*, is similarly pared down, a choice that makes these graphic novels particularly well-suited to readers intimidated by the hefty originals.

Graceling. By Kristin Cashore. Art by Gareth Hinds. 2021. HarperCollins/Etch. Gr. 7–12.

Key world building and plot details of Cashore's acclaimed debut are neatly integrated into the artwork of this adaptation, which will give existing fans the details they love while making it easy for new readers to absorb the complex plot.

The Great Gatsby: A Graphic Novel Adaptation. By F. Scott Fitzgerald. Art by K. Woodman-Maynard. 2021. Candlewick. Gr. 9–12.

Many teens will encounter Fitzgerald's modernist classic in high-school English classes, and Woodman-Maynard's adaptation is a deft complement to the novel, focusing on the moods of the story and bringing new perspectives to the iconic characters.

The Handmaid's Tale. By Margaret Atwood and Reneé Nault. Art by Reneé Nault. 2019. Doubleday/Nan A. Talese. Gr. 10–12.

Older teens interested in further exploration of the themes of Atwood's perennially relevant novel, a frequent classroom pick, will find plenty to think about in this adaptation, originally published for adults, that eerily and frankly visualizes Gilead's horrors.

The Iliad. By Gareth Hinds. Art by the author. 2019. Candlewick. Gr. 8–11.

Students intimidated by reading Homeric poetry will be relieved to find this adaptation of *The Iliad*, which includes enough text to feel robust in addition to realistically detailed artwork of the many battles, heroes, and deities essential to the epic.

Slaughterhouse-Five: The Graphic Novel. By Kurt Vonnegut and Ryan North. Art by Albert Monteys. 2020. Boom!/Archaia. Gr. 10–12.

Vonnegut's inventive and invaluable novel is a classroom mainstay, and North and Monteys' adaptation (which contains the plot-essential nudity of the original) breathes fresh, thrilling new life into it while still conveying the original's key themes and concerns.

Speak: The Graphic Novel. By Laurie Halse Anderson. Art by E. M. Carroll. 2018. Farrar. Gr. 8–12.

Teens who study Anderson's remarkable debut novel will find added depth and dimension in this adaptation, which, in the hands of acclaimed horror-comics artist Carroll, amplifies the emotional tenor of Anderson's spare text.

To Kill a Mockingbird. By Harper Lee and Fred Fordham. Art by Fred Fordham. 2018. Harper. Gr. 8–12.

In his unwaveringly faithful visual representation of Lee's iconic novel, Fordham relies largely on dialogue and understated artwork, which echoes the tone of the original novel while allowing the weighty subject matter to come to the fore.

Watership Down: The Graphic Novel. By Richard Adams and James Sturm. Art by Joe Sutphin. 2023. Ten Speed. Gr. 7–12.

In naturalistic art that gives expressive life to its animal characters, this adaptation of Adams' classic capably presents the harsh realities the rabbits face in their search for a new home.

A Wizard of Earthsea: A Graphic Novel. By Ursula K. Le Guin. Art by Fred Fordham. 2025. Clarion. Gr. 7–12.

Rather than modernizing the old novel for contemporary audiences, Fordham maintains the classic tone of Le Guin's beloved fantasy, letting the artwork drive the story while emphasizing the awesome power of silence and stillness as Ged sails through a wide archipelago.

Art from *Animal Farm*.

Manga Essentials

Summer Reading for Anime Fans

by Ashley Hawkins

If you're looking for manga titles to add to your summer reading lists, here are a few with summer anime adaptations! Tap into the anime bump of the Summer 2025 season by sprinkling in the manga inspirations of some of the most anticipated TV adaptations of this year.

CITY. By Keiichi Arawi. Art by the author. Vertical. Gr. 9–12.

Arawi's previous hit, *Nichijou*, inspired an anime with a cult following, and CITY will likely follow in its predecessor's footsteps. With a similar tone of ridiculous hilarity, this gag manga is about a trio of college students navigating life in a city that oscillates from normal to absurd from moment to moment. This will be a great pick for fans of *Nichijou* and *Azumangah Daioh.*

Sakamoto Days. By Yuto Suzuki. Art by the author. Viz Media. Gr. 9–12.

Going into its second season, the anime adaptation of this action-comedy manga is already a crowd favorite. When a former hitman turns away from his profession to enjoy married bliss as a convenience-store owner and proud father, he eventually discovers that leaving the life he once led may not be as easy as he thought. Humorous and filled with intricate action sequences that are both thrilling and delightful, *Sakamoto Days* is the perfect read for those who enjoyed *Spy x Family* and *Way of the Househusband.*

The Summer Hikaru Died. By Mokumokuren. Art by the author. Tr. Ajani Oloye. Yen Press. Gr. 9–12.

Perhaps the most anticipated adaptation on this list is for this terrifying manga about Yoshiki, who discovers his best friend Hikaru, whom he loves more than anyone else, is dead and now possessed by something terrifying. Chillingly, the love and obsession are not over for Yoshiki or the thing calling itself Hikaru. Poignant and beautifully illustrated, this manga is a tense ride with spine-chilling moments. In Japan, summer and scary stories are synonymous, and this manga is the perfect expression of why that's the case.

With You and the Rain. By Ko Nikaido. Art by the author. Kodansha. Gr. 6–12.

Wholesome and sweet, this light, charming slice-of-life manga with a humorous thread is about a young woman who adopts a "dog"—only, that dog is very obviously a tanuki with some rather delightful abilities. A perfect read for animal lovers and those looking for soothing vibes, this is a nice twist on the ever-popular cat and dog manga that dominates a solid corner of the slice-of-life genre. This is a gentle, calming read filled with charming and humorous moments, perfect for a rainy summer day.

Art from *CITY.*

DRAWN TO READING

Exciting new graphic novels from Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing

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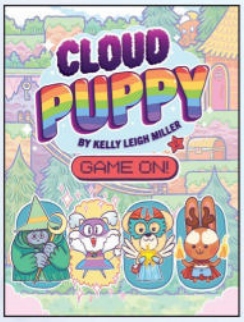
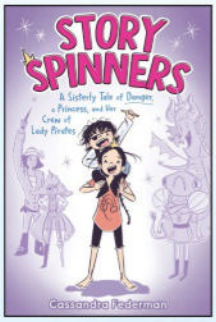
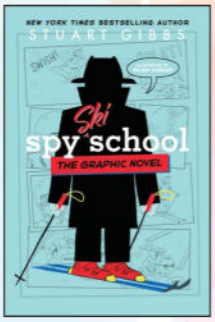


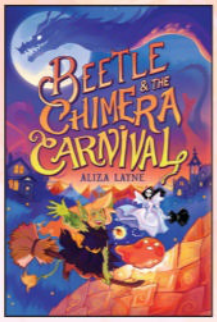
Game On!
Cloud Puppy Book #2
Written and illustrated by Kelly Leigh Miller
POB 9781665932158
Ages 6–9



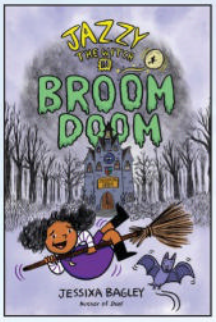
Story Spinners
Written and illustrated by
Cassandra Federman
HC 9781665918237 | **PB** 9781665918244
Ages 7–10



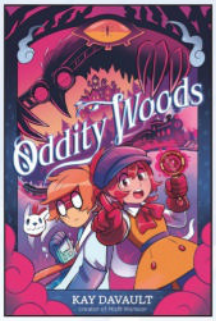
Spy Ski School the Graphic Novel
Part of Spy School the Graphic Novel
Written by Stuart Gibbs
Illustrated by Anjan Sarkar
HC 9781665956611 | **PB** 9781665956604
Ages 8–12



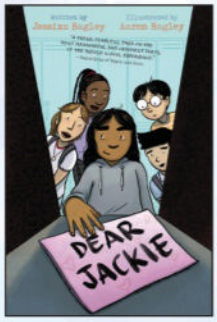
Beetle & the Chimera Carnival
Part of The Beetle Books
Written and illustrated by Aliza Layne
HC 9781665907484 | **PB** 9781665907477
Ages 8–12



Jazzy the Witch in Broom Doom
Jazzy the Witch Book #1
Written and illustrated by Jessixa Bagley
POB 9781665922326
Ages 8–12

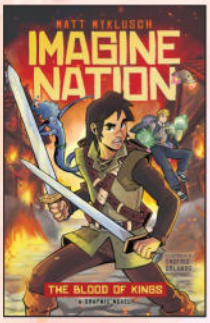


Oddity Woods
Part of Oddity Woods
Written and illustrated by Kay Davault
HC 9781665915847 | **PB** 9781665915830
Ages 8–12



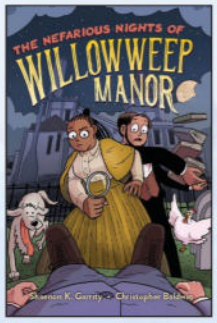
Dear Jackie
Written by Jessixa Bagley
Illustrated by Aaron Bagley
HC 9781534496583 | **PB** 9781534496576
Ages 8–12

The Many Misfortunes of Eugenia Wang
Written and illustrated by Stan Yan
HC 9781665943338 | **PB** 9781665943321
Ages 8–12

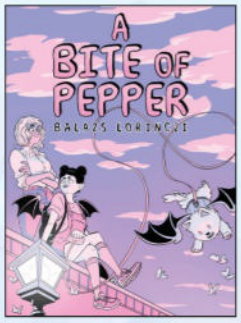


The Blood of Kings
Imagine Nation Book #1
Written and illustrated by Matt Myklusch
HC 9781665928182 | **PB** 9781665928175
Ages 10 and up

Free Piano (Not Haunted)
Written and illustrated by Whitney Gardner
HC 9781665938136 | **PB** 9781665938129
Ages 10 and up



The Nefarious Nights of Willowweep Manor
Part of Willowweep Manor
Written by Shaenon K. Garrity
Illustrated by Christopher Baldwin
HC 9781665930178 | **PB** 9781665930161
Ages 12 and up



A Bite of Pepper
Written and illustrated by Balazs Lorinczi
HC 9781665970471 | **PB** 9781665970464
Ages 14 and up

SIMON & SCHUSTER
Children's Publishing

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EDUCATION & LIBRARY

Art from *Rhino's Run*.

Summer Speed Reading Run

by Sarah Hunter

If your teen summer reading challenge is a numbers game, short books have immense appeal. And thankfully, the world of short books for teens is full of gems. The following titles, all of which are under 200 pages, represent an eclectic mix of genres and formats, offering a wide variety of options for a wide variety of readers.

And the Ocean Was Our Sky. By Patrick Ness. Illus. by Rovina Cai. 2018. HarperTeen. Gr. 9–12.

Ness' experimental novel presents a pared down, inverted take on *Moby Dick* from the perspective of the whale. Teens encountering the classic novel in English class will especially appreciate this fable-like story.

At the End of the World. By Nadia Mikail. 2023. Feiwel and Friends. Gr. 9–12.

Aisha and her mother attempt to repair familial relationships in the year before an asteroid hits Earth in this spare, emotional, and elegiac story about community, connection, memory, and family.

A Bird in the Air Means We Can Still Breathe. By Mahogany L. Browne. 2025. Crown. Gr. 9–12.

Browne's "quilt of stories, poems, fables, and woes circling the moment we all survived" centers teens of color who endured the COVID-19 pandemic. The linked stories are unsparing in their examination of the pandemic and its impact on young lives.

Bull. By David Elliott. 2017. Clarion. Gr. 9–12.

This retelling of the myth of Theseus and the Minotaur uses a variety of engaging verse forms to give voice to a wide cast of characters. Teens studying Greek mythology in particular will appreciate this modernized, lively text.

David Tung Can't Have a Girlfriend until He Gets into an Ivy League College. By Ed Lin. 2020. Kaya. Gr. 9–12.

With self-deprecating humor, David leads readers through daily life in his Chinese American family, where expectations are sky-high. Weekly visits to Chinese school give him insight into other Chinese American experiences—and just might lead to romance.

Different for Boys. By Patrick Ness. Illus. by Tea Bendix. 2023. Candlewick/Walker. Gr. 9–12.

Blending philosophical musings with realistically voiced teen thoughts and dialogue, Ness plays with ideas of truth and censorship in his novella-length exploration of masculinity, sex, and losing one's virginity.

Kent State. By Deborah Wiles. 2020. Scholastic. Gr. 7–10.

Wiles evocatively tells the story of the Kent State shooting through a chorus of unattributed voices of those involved in the tragedy, stirringly inviting readers to think critically about both our history and our present moment.

Landscape with Invisible Hand. By M. T. Anderson. 2017. Candlewick. Gr. 9–12.

An alien race promises to put an end to suffering with advanced technology—true for the wealthy, not so much for everyone else. Sarcastic artist Adam tries to bring in

cash by entertaining the new overlords in this funny, prescient social satire.

The Last Execution. By Jesper Wung-Sung. 2016. Simon & Schuster. Gr. 8–12.

This haunting blend of poetry and prose reveals the details of the day 15-year-old Niels is due to be executed in 1853 Denmark, and the range of voices and perspectives on the event raise powerful questions of whether justice was actually served.

The Place between Breaths. By An Na. 2018. Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy. Gr. 7–12.

In this raw, powerful, character-driven novel, Na offers emotionally drawn insights into a teen girl's experience and struggles with schizophrenia. Stunning twists and revelations and a nonlinear narrative emphasize the character's emotional reality.

Price of Duty. By Todd Strasser. 2018. Simon & Schuster. Gr. 7–10.

Wounded in action and in line for a medal, Jake is silently questioning the purpose and legitimacy of war. His reservations and post-combat experiences are complicated by a military family legacy and beliefs about honor. A tightly written, thought-provoking book.

Rhino's Run. By Robert Lipsyte. 2025. Harper. Gr. 9–12.

In a novel featuring exquisite character work and hard-hitting, deeply relevant subject matter, Ronnie "Rhino" Rhinehart grapples with his sense of self and position of leadership after a bullied student brings a gun to his troubled-youth therapy group.

Stone Mirrors: The Sculpture and Silence of Edmonia Lewis. By Jeannine Atkins. 2017. Atheneum. Gr. 9–12.

Atkins' slim, smoothly written story pulls together the scant historical details of Edmonia Lewis' life to create an artful novel in verse about the celebrated sculptor, who was accused of poisoning in 1863 and subsequently left the U.S. for Rome, where she flourished as an artist.

Thirty Talks Weird Love. By Alessandra Narváez Varela. 2021. Cinco Puntos. Gr. 8–12.

In 1999 Ciudad Juárez, 13-year-old Anamaria is struggling with the news of missing girls as well as her own mental health when she's visited improbably by her 30-year-old self. At times cheeky, macabre, and serious, this novel in verse powerfully explores family, trauma, and resilience.

Wild Poppies. By Haya Saleh. Tr. by Marcia Lynx Qualey. 2023. Levine Querido. Gr. 6–9.

Amid the Syrian war, two brothers are separated as they each strive to protect what remains of their family in this taut, searing dissection of the destructiveness of war. Though the book is unflinching in its depictions, the brothers' hope and love for each other is a bright light.

With a Star in My Hand: Rubén Darío, Poetry Hero. By Margarita Engle. 2020. Atheneum. Gr. 7–10.

Grounded in careful research, Engle's novel in verse tells the life story of famed poet Rubén Darío, from his sad and lonely childhood, through racism, violence, and political unrest, to being an influential poet, credited with launching modernism in Latin American poetry.

Art from *With a Star in My Hand.*

Reserve These Reads

Children & Teens

Get your hands on these hotly anticipated books, all out this month.

Older

Amelia, If Only. By Becky Albertalli. HarperCollins. Gr. 9–12.

Best-selling Albertalli is back with another heartfelt and funny novel, this time about teens on a road trip to meet a chaotic YouTuber on whom Amelia has an impossible parasocial crush.

A Girl Walks into the Forest. By Madeleine Roux. HarperCollins/Quill Tree. Gr. 8–12.

A girl walks into the forest, but something much different walks out in Roux's latest offering, a genre-blending folk-horror that follows Valla, who loses her physical beauty and finds her true self in exchange.

Lady's Knight. By Amie Kaufman and Meagan Spooner. HarperCollins/Storytide. Gr. 10–12.

Blacksmith's daughter Gwen (disguised as Sir Gawain) helps Lady Isobelle escape her awful guardian's plans for her in this hilarious, sparklingly witty medieval rom-com.

We Can Never Leave. By H. E. Edgmon. St. Martin's/Wednesday. Gr. 9–12.

Edgmon breaks the fourth wall to assert that this is not a heartwarming story about setting aside differences but an enthralling tale of a caravan of magically gifted teens.

Middle

Pacheco and the Witch of the Mountain. By Juan E. Zambrano. Art by the author. Andrews McMeel. Gr. 4–8.

Pacheco has been taught to fear the witches who live in the distance, but he's entranced by the lights in their tower and soon becomes an apprentice to the exiled Witch of the Mountain.

Tyger. By SF Said. Illus. by Dave McKean. Penguin Workshop. Gr. 4–7.

In an alternate London where imperialism lives on, Adam discovers a magical tyger in need of his help. A rich, multifaceted story with deeply evocative illustrations.

We Carry the Sun. By Tae Keller. Illus. by Rachel Wada. Norton/Young Readers. Gr. 2–5.

In her first picture book, Newbery Medalist Keller explores the invention of solar power, which is surprisingly complex.

Young

I Like Hoops. By Juwanda G. Ford. Illus. by Jada Jeni Bennett. Holiday. K–Gr. 2.

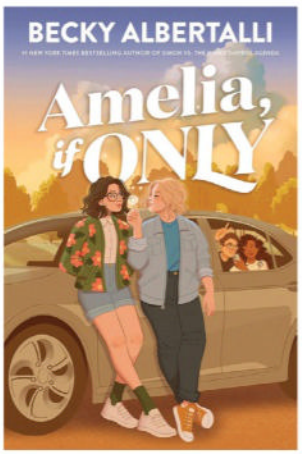
It's the final minutes of a tied basketball game, and two kids are doing their best to win. Bright, bold artwork and highly decodeable language that doesn't sacrifice plot makes this cheerworthy.

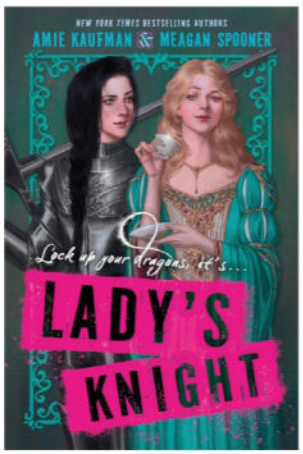
This Book Is Dangerous! A Narwhal and Jelly Picture Book. By Ben Clanton. Illus. by the author. Tundra. PreS–Gr. 2.

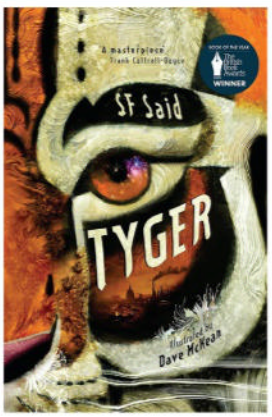
Fan-favorites Narwhal and Jelly move from the early-reader-comics space to picture books in this playful, interactive title that finds anxious Jelly in a sea of trouble.

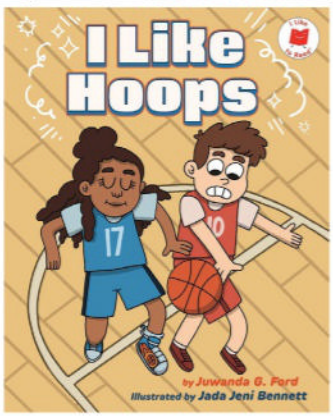
The Day the Crayons Made Friends. By Drew Daywalt. Illus. by Oliver Jeffers. Philomel. Pres–Gr. 1.

The beloved, intrepid crayons from Duncan's room are off on another adventure in this third book in the blockbuster series—this time, they're out on a mission to find some friends.



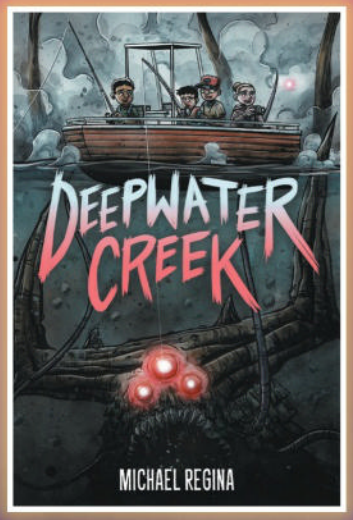




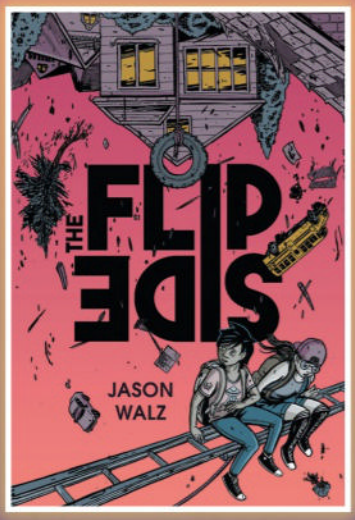


HAUNTINGLY GOOD GRAPHIC NOVELS

The Newest Eerie and Suspenseful Middle Grade and YA Reads



"A fast-paced, action-packed story about facing our fears in order to take care of the people we love."
—Lora Senf, Bram Stoker Award winner and author of *The Clackity*



★"Transcends the already top-notch adventure story . . . more profound, more accessible, and more relevant."
—*Booklist*, starred review

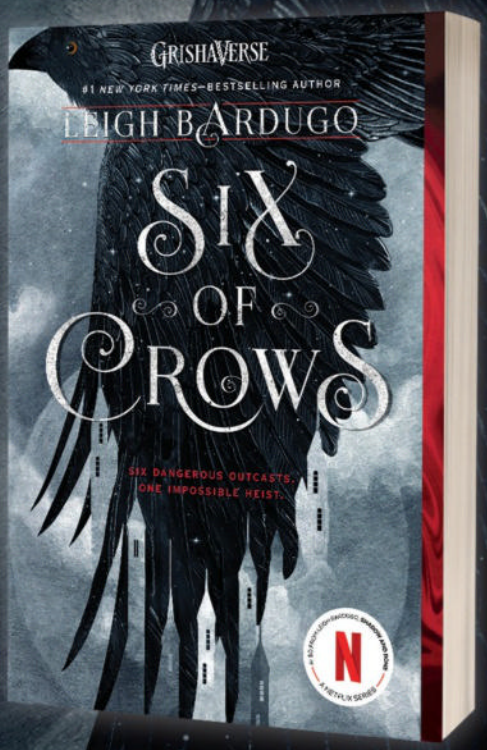
★"A dazzling, heartfelt journey through fading memories."
—*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

"A dark and fun foray into the horror comedy genre for young graphic novel readers."
—*School Library Journal*

DISCOVER MORE GRAPHIC NOVELS FROM EVERY GENRE!

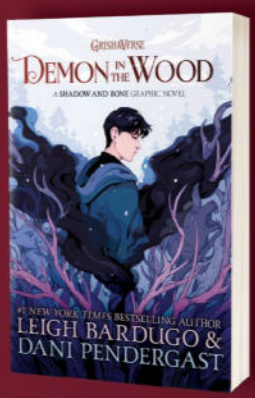
Your summer reading adventure awaits

Dive into the captivating fantasy phenomenon from
#1 *New York Times* bestselling author Leigh Bardugo



"Full-throttle adventure"
—The New York Times Book Review

More unforgettable adventures by Leigh Bardugo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Demon in the Wood
A Shadow and Bone Graphic Novel
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Leigh Bardugo & Dani Pendergast